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CHURCH AND KING.

COMPRISING

I.

THE CHURCH AND DISSENT,

CONSIDERED IN THEIR PRACTICAL INFLUENCE, SHEWING THE CONNEXION OF CONSTITUTIONAL MONARCHY WITH THE CHURCH; AND THE IDENTITY OF THE VOLUNTARY PRINCIPLE WITH DEMOCRACY.

II.

THE CHURCH ESTABLISHED ON THE BIBLE;

OR, THE DOCTRINES AND DISCIPLINE OF THE CHURCH SHEWN IN THE ORDER AND CONNEXION OF THE YEARLY SERVICES APPOINTED FROM THE SCRIPTURES.

III.

THE CATECHISM, EXPLAINED AND ILLUSTRATED,

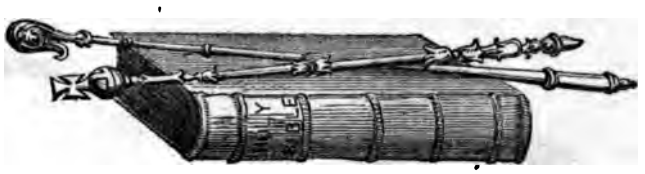
IN CONNEXION WITH THESE APPOINTED SERVICES.

IV.

PSALMS AND HYMNS ON THE SERVICES AND RITES OF THE CHURCH.

BY EDWARD OSLER,

FORMERLY ONE OF THE SURGEONS TO THE SWANSEA INFIRMARY.



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1837.

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TO THE

BATH CONSERVATIVE ASSOCIATION.

I DEDICATE to you a volume which owes to you its existence; and I do so with peculiar pleasure, because the Conservatives of Bath and its neighbourhood have been honourably distinguished for the spirit in which they have maintained their principles. Acting always upon the conviction that the constitution and character of England are identified with the Established Church, they have been forward on all occasions to vindicate that Church, to maintain her rights, and to promote her usefulness.

Upon this point the whole question has at length centred, and here the battle of the constitution is to be decided. Dissenters say that the Established Church in England shall be put down; the Papists, that a Protestant Establishment in Ireland shall no longer exist. They join to accomplish their respective objects, swelling their ranks with the anti-christian of every name; and the King's ministers have become their leaders. Against them all we declare that the Established National Church shall be maintained! nor maintained only, but extended. The State which acknowledges the principle of a National Church, confesses its duty to provide religious instruction for all. We will call upon it to perform the duty.

Always equivocating in their professions, and hostile in their actions, ministers have at length committed themselves, the avowed partizans of the voluntary system. They object to a grant from the public purse in lieu of church-rates, because dissenters ought not to be required to support an Establishment; and it is unjust to tax Ireland and Scotland for upholding a Church in England. Do they indeed think so? Then how dare they tax England and Scotland, to support that system of education in Ireland which the Protestants of the whole Empire have so emphatically denounced—not to speak of Maynooth, and of grants for promoting Popery abroad. Is it that they support the principle of an Establishment only where Popery is concerned?

Whatever may be their real views, nothing can be more clear than that the principle they have avowed is fatal to a national religion. Let the Legislature affirm that a Church, from which any parties may dissent, ought not to be assisted from the public funds, and it leaves the religion and morals of the Country to the voluntary care of individuals. However poor and demoralized any district may be, this principle would bar a grant for reclaiming it. Nay, it would restrain the State from employing a single clergyman. The colonial bishops and clergy must be cast off. Chaplains can be allowed no longer to jails, ships, or regiments. The Church must be thrown entirely upon the resources she has derived from private liberality, thankful if spoliation should not find the wolf's plea even for these. And though the multitudes, thickening around, perish in their ignorance by millions from generation to generation, the State is required, in the name of religious liberty, to abstain from any attempt to save them.

He must have read the Bible to very little purpose, who does not see that God requires the Nation, as such, to serve and honor Him; by reverently acknowledging Him in all its laws, institutions, and enterprises; restraining wickedness and vice, and promoting true religion and virtue. No cause and effect have a more close and certain connexion than national religion, and national prosperity. This truth is established on the equity of God's moral government. The good man may be severely tried in this life, for his reward is in heaven; and he may well endure the short sufferings which lead to eternal blessedness. But a Nation, which can exist as such only in this world, is rewarded with temporal prosperity, or punished with temporal calamity.

Have we not the proof? England glories in the name of a Christian Country. She has illustrated the character, abroad, by her lofty integrity, and her generous consideration for the weak: at home, by acknowledging in all her public proceedings her dependence upon God. Before Parliament proceeds to legislate, it implores his guidance. Before Judges administer the law, they publicly attend Divine worship. In distress, the Nation has been accustomed to humble itself with prayer and fasting: in victory and prosperity, to appear before God with thanksgiving. She has honored his Name. She has trusted in his Arm. She has promoted his worship. What have been the fruits? Through the horrors of an universal war she felt the security of peace. With all Europe arrayed against her, she achieved a triumph, whose naval and military glories, though the brightest in the page of history, are surpassed by its moral grandeur. Uncounted millions have been poured into her lap till she became the treasury of the world. What Nation, save Israel in the days of its faithfulness, was ever so highly honored, so signally blest? And shall we now cast away the fear of our Protector and Benefactor?

National religion is distinct from the collective piety of individuals: It consists in the performance by the State of its public duties, upon the same religious principles which govern the christian man in his private conduct. The distinction is the same with that which exists between national and private integrity, and national and private honor.—Individuals may be honest, while the State pursues its objects by trickery: they may respect themselves, while their Government disgraces itself: but the example of the Government is of incalculable power whether for good or evil. When it places character before every other consideration, it gives a general high tone to private virtue. National events command universal attention; for they have a grandeur, and permanency, commensurate with the interests they involve. Every one feels himself exalted by the glorious character of his Country. He cherishes the high principles upon which she rests her honor, and History gives the example to posterity.

So with national religion. The practical acknowledgment of God by the State has a power beyond all private efforts and example. The influence of individuals generally extends but a little way; but the State can grapple with the most gigantic evil. The christian example of an individual fills but his own circle; but that of the State is felt throughout the Empire. Good men rejoice at the accomplishment of their desires, and Vice shrinks and pines to see Virtue prosperous and honored.

Let us consider briefly the grounds upon which Dissenters object to church-rates. They contend that no man ought to be taxed for that which he objects to. Then why tax churchmen for dissenting objects? The registration and marriage bills were avowedly for the benefit of Dissent: nay, more! they were conceived, and brought forth in a spirit of hostility to the Church. It was hoped that by making the people independent of her ministrations, the ties which bind them to her communion might be weakened, or severed. Yet, if the system had succeeded, instead of proving a miserable abortion, churchmen would have been required to contribute to its yearly expenses a larger sum than the whole amount of dissenters' church-rates.

They say, that they have a conscientious objection to pay church-rates. That which a christian conscientiously believes to be his duty, he acts upon as firmly through evil report and suffering, as through good report and personal advantage. But dissenters

submitted quietly to this payment, till the apparently defenceless state of the Church gave them a prospect of attacking her with success; and they have already warned us, that, succeeding in this, they will find other ground for active hostility. This is not conscience, but party.

They plead the grievance of being compelled to support a Church from which they derive no advantage. No advantage! Is it nothing to live in a land where God's word is taught in every parish; so that go where they will they have a place to worship Him? Nothing, that through all the changes and revolutions of 300 years, the whole Bible has been everywhere read to the people, where few in comparison, could have read it for themselves? Nothing, to live and act with christians, through an universal system of religious worship and instruction, so that their servants, their acquaintance, their business connexions, are all taught to govern their conduct by the Gospel? The very Bible they read was given to them by the Church which they are now seeking to destroy.

They profess to be guided in all things by the Bible, and the Bible only. Where does the Bible sanction their hostility to the Church? Will they appeal to the example of our Lord? He wrought a miracle that he might pay the tribute required for the service of the Temple; a tribute which may with strict propriety be called a church-rate. Or to that of the apostles? They worshipped continually in the Temple; after the ascension of the Lord; after the coming of the Holy Ghost; after the conversion of the Gentiles. Though they knew that the Temple belonged to a dispensation now superseded, that it was profaned by the wickedness of the priests and rulers, and that it was doomed to speedy destruction, yet they honored it; for it was built to the true God, whose word was read therein; and it stood, the visible acknowledgment by the Nation of its allegiance and duty. Their precepts accord with their conduct. "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake." "Render to all their due; tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor."

Thus it appears that the principle upon which dissenters resist church-rates is violated by themselves: That their conscientious scruples resolve themselves into party hostility: That their plea which affirms that they derive no advantage from the Church is utterly unfounded: and that their conduct is condemned by the Bible.

Let us appeal from the dissenter at party meetings, to the dissenter in his closet; and call upon him to consider, seriously, and in the presence of God, why he should feel it a grievance that his property continues to be charged with a very small assessment for the support of religion, to which it has been subject from the time that England was an orderly and christian Nation. He objects to an Establishment! But God appointed an established Church for Israel. Christ and his apostles honored it. He has declared that Kings and Queens shall protect and support the christian Church, its nursing fathers, and nursing mothers. Dissent itself, in this, our own day, has formed an established national church in the South Sea Islands. Can that be sinful which God Himself ordained? Or is that to be deprecated which He hath promised? Or can that which is right at Otaheite, be wrong in England?

He objects to a form of prayer! He is not required to use it; and he may well hold his opinion doubtfully, when he condemns the general practice, in all countries and ages, of the purest churches, and the holiest men. Besides, the Liturgy of the Church is used in many dissenting meetings, and these among the most respectable.

He thinks the teaching of the Church defective, and a written sermon cold and tame! Without comparing the merits of extempore and written sermons, he should remember that the service of the Church includes instruction with which no sermon may compare. She teaches the people from the pure word of God. Every Sunday they hear eleven chapters and psalms, which are read in such orderly connexion, as to make it easy to remember, and understand them.

Will he affirm that the clergy are ungodly? Let the reverence of their flocks; let the public subscription lists, which prove how very far their liberality transcends that of the laity; let the schools and the local charities,

supported chiefly by their exertions, shame the calumny.

Does he talk of abuses? No true churchman defends them. He would not have a spot stain the purity of the Church he loves. But evils are not always abuses. If a living be too poor to support a minister, it must be held in plurality. If the parish cannot afford a glebe-house, there must be non-residence. They who do all they can, are not to be condemned because they cannot do all they would. Let the practice of Dissent itself be considered. It forms a Home Mission, to carry religious instruction into "poor and benighted districts." Here is the main principle of an establishment,—that if the people are too poor to obtain instruction, it shall be provided for them; and if they are too ignorant to seek it, it shall be forced upon their attention. The Committee send a Minister into a district. Here is lay patronage. They charge him with three village stations, at each of which he preaches once every Sunday. Here is plurality, non-residence, and single duty.

It is a glorious thing to churchmen to see the burst of enthusiasm which has filled the land; at once the means of deliverance from present danger, and the pledge of tenfold exertions henceforward in Christian duties. Thus let us consider it as Christians, scorning the low boast of party triumph. If we understand our principles aright, and hold them as we ought, no party spirit will taint our conduct. Only unworthy objects require angry violence. As the substance of the Gospel is perfect truth, and the spirit of the Gospel perfect charity, and these two are inseparable; so it is our business to prove that our cause is holy, by the meekness, as well as firmness, with which we maintain it. Against our enemies, indeed, let us war with determined, deadly hatred. Our enemies are ignorance, misery, and sin; and, in striving to exterminate these, we shall best subdue the prejudices of political opponents.

There never was a time when the Church was so strong as at the present moment. The trials of the last seven years have taught her friends to understand her claims, and to know their duty. Silently, but surely, she has been everywhere extending former means of usefulness, and introducing new agencies for good. Through the long and bitter winter, while the Government looked upon her coldly, and the storms beat heavily against her, she has been swelling her buds, and giving new force to all her energies. The winter is almost gone. With returning spring she will stand admired in her beauty. The fragrance of her blossom will perfume the land, and the richness of her clusters gladden the nations.

London, March, 1837.

AN ANALYTICAL INDEX

TO THE

CHURCH ESTABLISHED ON THE BIBLE;

BEING

A KEY TO THE YEARLY SERVICE OF THE CHURCH.

The order which prevails in the yearly service of the Church is not exceeded in a system of Natural History. First, the whole year is divided into two parts; of which the former, extending from Advent to Trinity Sunday, is devoted more prominently to doctrines; the latter, containing the Sundays after Trinity, is chiefly occupied with christian practice. The former division breaks naturally into eight sections, whose subjects follow in such just order, as to form a regular course of sound doctrine. Again, the subjects of the successive Sundays and holidays in each of these sections have the same orderly arrangement. Finally, the several chapters and portions of Scripture, appointed for each Sunday and holiday, unite to teach, illustrate, and apply the subject for the day.

DIVISION I.

In this Division are contained the following subjects:—I. The coming of Christ, and the preparation required of us:—II. his incarnation, and nativity:—III. his glory and offices:—IV. our condition, duty, and hope, as fallen and guilty creatures:—V. our Redemption by the sacrifice of Christ:—VI. our salvation by his victory:—VII. the Church of Christ:—VIII. the influence of the Holy Ghost, to establish, teach, and comfort it. These are severally explained in the seasons of Advent, Christmas, the Epiphany, Lent, Passion Week, Easter, the Sundays after Easter, and Whitsuntide.

SECTION I. ADVENT.

The general subject of Advent is the establishment of Christ's kingdom on earth; and his coming with his glorious majesty to judge both the quick and the dead: for which event the services teach us to prepare. The *first* Sunday calls to repentance: the *second*, directs to the Scriptures, which teach and warn us: the *third*, to the Ministers, whom Christ hath appointed to instruct us therefrom: the *fourth*, to Christ himself, our hope, refuge, and King.

FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT..... p. 11.

God convicts his people of sin, and calls them to repentance. *Morning Lesson.*—We are enjoined to diligence in renouncing sin, and working righteousness. *Epistle.*—The universal establishment of Christ's kingdom foretold. *Evening Lesson.* Christ enters Jerusalem as her King, and casts out from the temple them who profaned it. *Gospel.*

SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT..... p. 13

God hath given the Scriptures for our learning, hope, and comfort. *Epistle.*—A worldly spirit condemned, which, following vain pursuits, forgets God and his Law. *Morning Lesson.*—The judgment of the world, and the triumph of God's people. *Evening Lesson.*—The signs of Christ's coming to judgment. *Gospel.*

THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT. ..... p. 22.

The office, commission, and independence of the christian minister. *Epistle.*—His character, to be courageous, and self-denying; his business, to impart the blessings of the Gospel; and his duty, to direct his followers to Christ. *Gospel.*—The glory and happiness of the Church at the coming of Christ, for which his ministers are appointed to prepare. *Morning and Evening Lessons.*

FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT..... p. 23.

Trust in man condemned, and the help of God promised. *Morning Lesson.*—Christ foretold to come as our King, refuge, and Saviour. *Evening Lesson.*—The joy, confidence, and peace of such as wait for his coming. *Epistle.*—Ministers are sent to prepare his way, and to call the people to him. *Gospel.*

SECTION II. CHRISTMAS.

We celebrate at this season the first coming of Christ, when he visited us in great humility; and learn the doctrines connected therewith. On *Christmas day*, we observe the mystery of God manifested in the flesh. On the *first* Sunday after, the salvation he wrought for us. On the feast of the *Circumcision*, the covenant of God in Christ. On the *second* Sunday after Christmas, the blessings we obtain thereby.

CHRISTMAS DAY..... p. 24.

The promised child is both God and man. *Morning Lesson.*—He is Immanuel, born of a virgin. *Evening Lesson.*—He is the eternal Son of God. *Epistle.*—His deity, manhood, humiliation, and rejection. *Gospel.*—His birth. *Second Morning Lesson.*—Through him we become sons of God. *Second Evening Lesson and Gospel.*

Proper Psalms. He is our teacher, xix. Our King, xlv. The blessings of his reign, lxxxv. The son of David, lxxxix. Our King and High Priest, cx. His birth at Bethlehem Ephrata; and the establishment of his Church, cxxxii.

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS... p. 27.

Jesus, the Saviour of his people. *Gospel.*—Salvation from their enemies figured in the deliverance of Jerusalem. *Morning Lesson.*—Salvation from their sins figured in Hezekiah's recovery. *Evening Lesson.*—He redeems them from the bondage of the Law, that they might receive the adoption of sons. *Epistle.*

THE CIRCUMCISION. ..... p. 27.

Circumcision appointed. *Morning Lesson.*—A seal of the righteousness which is by faith. *Epistle.* The outward sign profiteth nothing, without the inward grace. *Second Morning Lesson.*—The conditions which God required. *Evening Lesson.*—The circumcision of Christ. *Gospel.*—The blessings which christians obtain by their covenant with him. *Second Evening Lesson.*

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS. p. 29.

The epistle and gospel are the same as for circumcision. The lessons encourage to unbounded confidence in God; who promises help, support, victory, and blessings.

SECTION III. EPIPHANY.

From the humiliation of our Lord, we proceed to his glory, example, and authority. The manifestation of his glory is described on the feast of the *Epiphany*. The *first* Sunday after, offers his example of devoted obedience. The *second*, of brotherly kindness. The *third*, the blessings he freely gives. The *fourth*, his sovereignty. The *fifth*, his government of the Church. The *sixth*, his coming to judgment. The services for each day afford suitable instruction in our own duties.

THE FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY. ..... p. 30.

Christ manifested; by the star which appeared to the wise men. *Gospel.*—By the descent of the Holy Ghost at his baptism. *Second Morning Lesson.*—By his first miracle. *Second Evening Lesson.*—By the revelation of the mystery of the calling of the Gentiles. *Epistle.*—By the establishment, and future glory of the holy Church Universal. *Morning and Evening Lessons.*

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY. p. 40.

The Redemption of God's people. *Morning and Evening Lessons.*—Our duty therefore, and reasonable service, to devote ourselves to God, serving Him cheerfully, each in his allotted place. *Epistle.*—The example of Christ, in honouring his heavenly Father, and being subject to his earthly parents. *Gospel.*

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY. .....p. 41.

The miserable condition from which God redeemed his people. *Morning Lesson.*—The price of their redemption was the humiliation, sufferings, and death of Christ. *Evening Lesson.*—We are therefore required to exercise brotherly kindness in a spirit of humility. *Epistle.*—Marriage, the bond of society with its affections, honoured by our Lord; and the benevolence he exercised at Cana of Galilee. *Gospel.*

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY. p. 43.

The blessings of the Gospel are offered freely to every one. *Morning Lesson.*—Even to the outcast and stranger. *Evening Lesson.*—This is illustrated by our Lord healing the leper, and the Centurion's servant. *Gospel.*—But the unfaithful children shall be condemned, and cast out. *Evening Lesson*, v. 9—12, and *Gospel*, v. 12.—Forgiveness of enemies is required of us, as we have been forgiven. *Epistle.*

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY. ..... p. 44.

God's government, in blessing the righteous, and lowly, and punishing the wicked, and rebellious. *Morning and Evening Lessons.*—Christ exercises absolute authority over the material and spiritual worlds; controlling the elements, and commanding the unclean spirits. *Gospel.*—We are required to obey Rulers for conscience sake, seeing that God hath appointed them to govern. *Epistle.*

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY. p. 45.

God's justice and mercy in his dealings with the Church. *Morning Lesson.*—A fallen but repenting Church pleading for mercy. *Evening Lesson.*—The character and duties required of God's people. *Epistle.*—The doom of unfaithful professors in the judgment shewn by the parable of the tares. *Gospel.*

SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY. p. 47.

God's judgment upon the Jews, and establishment of a New Jerusalem. *Morning Lesson.*—The restoration of Israel, the resurrection, and last judgment. *Evening Lesson.*—Christ revealed from heaven with his angels. *Gospel.*—The hope and duty of his people who wait for his coming. *Epistle.*

SECTION IV. LENT.

Strictly speaking, Lent begins on Ash Wednesday; but the subjects of the three preceding Sundays are preparatory to, and connected with it; and therefore it is proper to include the whole under one section.

Septuagesima Sunday shews the creation of man in innocence, and teaches his duty to his Creator. *Sexagesima* presents him fallen and guilty; yet an object of God's merciful solicitude. *Quinquagesima* directs to God's gracious covenant. *Ash Wednesday* calls to exercises of deep humiliation and penitence. The *first* Sunday in Lent shews the trials which exercise God's people, and the judgment of impenitent sinners. The *second*, condemns sin. The *third*, enforces holiness. The *fourth*, illustrates the free grace of God, who forgives, and blesses penitent sinners. The *fifth*, introduces the Almighty Saviour, delivering his people from their enemies, by his power; and reconciling them to God by his atonement and intercession.

SEPTUAGESIMA SUNDAY.....p. 58.

The Creation. *Morning and Evening Lessons.*—God calls every one to serve Him. *Gospel.*—

Strenuously, and perseveringly; as they who contend for an incorruptible crown. *Epistle.*—A sabbath of holy rest is appointed. *Evening Lesson.*

SEXAGESIMA SUNDAY..... p. 59.

The Fall of Man. *Morning Lesson.*—General corruption of the earth: the Flood denounced. *Evening Lesson.*—The arduous duties and painful trials of a faithful minister. *Epistle.*—The various effects of the Word, according to the different characters and dispositions which receive it, shewn in the parable of the sower. *Gospel.*

QUINQUAGESIMA SUNDAY.....p. 60.

God's gracious covenant with Noah, *Morning Lesson;* and with Abraham, *Evening Lesson.*—Its blessings are brought to us by the sufferings of the Redeemer; and we obtain them by faith and prayer. *Gospel.*—It is required of us that christian charity possess our hearts, and govern all our conduct. *Epistle.*

ASH-WEDNESDAY. ..... p. 62.

The means which God hath appointed for averting National judgments, are public humiliation and penitence by the collective people. *Epistle.*—Personal devotion should be offered in secret to Him who seeth in secret. *Gospel.*—The proper Psalms are the seven called 'Penitential;' namely, vi. xxxii. xxxviii. li. cii. cxxx. cxliii.;

FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT..... p. 77.

The chastisement of Lot in the loss of all his wealth, for the sake of which he had chosen to live among abominable sinners: the judgment of Sodom and Gomorrha. *Morning Lesson.*—The trial of Abraham's faith, and the blessing he obtained. *Evening Lesson.*—The grace of God, who hears and succours us, is sufficient in all our trials. *Epistle.*—The temptation and victory of Christ. *Gospel.*

SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT.....p. 79.

We are required to walk in the faith and fear of God, shunning all impurity and fraud. *Epistle.*—The faith of the Canaanitish woman. *Gospel.*—The unbelief and fraud of Rebecca, and the deceit and falsehood of Jacob. *Morning Lesson.*—The sin of Shechem and Dinah, and its fatal consequences: the impious fraud of Simeon and Levi. *Evening Lesson.*

THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT. ..... p. 80.

Holiness, love, and purity, enjoined. *Epistle.*—Illustrated by the example of Joseph. *Morning and Evening Lessons.*—We are delivered from the power of evil by the strength of Christ; but we are required to work with him; being warned of the fatal consequences, if, having been delivered from sin, we fall again into its bondage. *Gospel.*

FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT. ..... p. 81.

The forgiveness and blessings we obtain from God, illustrated in Joseph's kindness to his brethren. *Morning and Evening Lessons.*—The excellency of the Covenant which is in Christ, contrasted with the rigour and bondage of the Law. *Epistle.*—The bread of life figured in the miracle of the loaves and fishes. *Gospel.*

FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT.....p. 82.

The Almighty Saviour who came to deliver Israel. *Morning Lesson.*—Their miserable bondage: Aaron enters on his office to plead for Israel. *Evening Lesson.*—Christ is the I AM, and saves us from death. *Gospel.*—He is our High Priest, who redeems and purifies us with his own blood. *Epistle.*

SECTION V. PASSION WEEK.

From the consideration of our state as sinners, we proceed, in order, to the means of our deliverance. In Passion Week our attention is directed to some of the most important doctrines of Christianity. On *Sunday*, we observe our Lord's example of condescension and humility. On *Monday*, the conflict he sustained for us, and the victory he achieved with his single arm. On *Tuesday*, his firm and patient endurance of indignities. On *Wednesday* is presented to us the doctrine of Redemption. On *Thursday*, we learn the right use of the Holy Communion. On *Friday*, we see Christ made an offering for sin. On *Saturday*, we are taught the nature, and use of Baptism.

SUNDAY NEXT BEFORE EASTER.....p. 83.

God's judgments upon Egypt for the deliverance of Israel. *Morning and Evening Lessons.*—The sufferings and death of Christ, as related by St. Matthew. *Second Morning Lesson, and Gospel.*—The glory from which he stooped; the humiliation and suffering to which he submitted; and the exaltation he thereby obtained. *Second Evening Lesson, and Epistle.*—His example offered for our imitation. *Epistle*

MONDAY NEXT BEFORE EASTER .... p. 84.

The victorious Saviour: Israel, justly punished, pleads with God by his former mercies, and their present misery. *Epistle.*—Our Lord's agony, &c., as related by St. Mark. *Gospel.*

TUESDAY NEXT BEFORE EASTER .... p. 85.

Christ's firm and patient endurance. *Epistle.*—His crucifixion, as related by St. Mark. *Gospel.*

WEDNESDAY NEXT BEFORE EASTER, p. 86.

Israel destroyed by their own guilt, but redeemed by God's goodness. *Morning Lesson.*—The blessings they enjoy, when thus restored to his favour. *Evening Lesson.* The prophecy of Caiaphas that Jesus should die for the people. *Second Morning Lesson.*—The efficacy of his one sacrifice to put away sin. *Epistle.*—The betrayal, agony, denial, and condemnation of Christ, as related by St. Luke. *Gospel.*

THURSDAY NEXT BEFORE EASTER .. p. 87.

The time of Christ's appearing, and the object of his suffering, foretold by Daniel. *Morning Lesson.*

The new Covenant of blessings which he brought for Israel. *Evening Lesson.*—Purity and love required of all his disciples. *Second Morning Lesson.*—The nature, and right use of the Holy Communion. *Epistle.*—The crucifixion, as related by St. Luke. *Gospel.*

GOOD FRIDAY .....p. 89.

The offering of Isaac a type of the sacrifice of Christ. *Morning Lesson.*—His sufferings, and death foretold by Isaiah. *Evening Lesson.*—And described by St. John. *Second Morning Lesson, and Gospel.*—The inefficacy of the legal sacrifices, and the all-sufficiency of the one offering of Christ. *Epistle.*—The privileges and obligations of Christians, as members of his Church; and their duty to suffer patiently, after his example. *Second Evening Lesson.*

Proper Psalms; Christ's sufferings foretold, with the end, and object of them, xxii. lxix. His taking away of the legal sacrifices, xl. The afflicted christian crying to God for deliverance, liv. lxxxviii.

EASTER EVEN.....p. 90.

The burial of our Lord. *Second Morning Lesson.*—The precautions taken by his enemies to prevent the removal of his body. *Gospel.*—Our deliverance from captivity by the blood of the Covenant. *Morning Lesson;*—our baptism, with its spiritual benefits, figured in the passage of the Israelites out of Egypt. *Evening Lesson;*—and in the salvation of Noah and his family by the Ark. *Epistle.*—The Rest that remaineth for the people of God. *Second Evening Lesson.*

SECTION VI. EASTER.

Christ by his one offering, made a full atonement for our sins, and reconciled us to God. By his victory over Death and Hell, he saved us from our spiritual enemies, to whose tyranny we had been subjected by the Fall of Adam. This deliverance we celebrate at Easter.

On *Easter day*, we see the deliverance of his people from the powers of darkness completed by the victory he wrought. On *Monday in Easter week*, the provision he hath made to nourish and defend them through all their journey to heaven. On *Tuesday*, the judgment appointed for such as despise salvation.

EASTER DAY .....p. 91.

Christ, the very Paschal Lamb, by the sprinkling of whose blood we are saved from death. *Morning Lesson.*—Our salvation figured, in the deliverance of Israel, and the destruction of their enemies, at the Red Sea. *Evening Lesson.*—The Resurrection. *Gospel.*—The doctrine of the Resurrection preached on the day of Pentecost. *Second Evening Lesson.*—We are made partakers of the death and resurrection of Christ in our baptism. *Second Morning Lesson.*—We are therefore required, as risen with Christ, to set our affections on things above. *Epistle.*

Proper Psalms. The exaltation of Messiah, ii. The troubles through which he passed to it, lvii. God's faithfulness to his covenant, cxi. Praise for his goodness, cxiii. His power magnified in the deliverance of his people, cxiv. Joyful thanksgiving for the salvation he hath so triumphantly wrought for us, cxviii.

MONDAY IN EASTER WEEK .....p. 93.

The gift of Manna. *Morning Lesson;*—and of water from the Rock at Horeb: the victory over Amalek. *Evening Lesson.*—Christ, being risen, is made known to the disciples at Emmaus in the breaking of bread. *Gospel.*—He commissions the Apostles to teach and baptise all nations, promising the help of his presence even to the end of the world. *Second Morning Lesson.* The doctrine of the Resurrection is preached to the Jews. *Second Evening Lesson;*—and to the Gentiles. *Epistle.*

TUESDAY IN EASTER WEEK ..... p. 94.

The Law is given from Sinai. *Morning Lesson.*—The sin of the golden calf; Moses intercedes for Israel; but executes judgment on the sinners. *Evening Lesson.*—The fact of the Resurrection, as related by St. Luke. *Second Morning Lesson.*—The truth that our Lord rose again with his body proved by his eating before his disciples. *Gospel.*—The Resurrection of Christ establishes the certainty that we shall rise again with our bodies. *Second Evening Lesson.*—St. Paul, preaching the doctrine of the Resurrection, warns that all who despise salvation shall perish. *Epistle.*

SECTION VII. THE SUNDAYS AFTER EASTER.

Christ having thus purchased to himself a Church by his own blood, we now consider the nature, character, and objects of this Church: the nature of which is described on the *first* Sunday after Easter; its safety, as a sheepfold under Christ, the good Shepherd, on the *second*; the duty of all its members, on the *third*; the principle upon which they perform their duty, namely, a renewed heart, on the *fourth*; the danger of neglecting their duty, on the *fifth*; the authority of the Christian Ministry, as the representatives of Christ, on *Ascension Day*; and the evil of Schism, on the *Sunday after*.

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EASTER .....p. 95.

The character, faith, and privileges of those who are members of Christ's Church. *Epistle.*—The power and authority of the ministers whom he hath set over it. *Gospel.*—The guilt and danger of intruding into their office. *Morning Lesson.*—The deadly tendency of a worldly spirit shewn in the covetousness of Balaam. *Evening Lesson.*

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EASTER....p. 107.

The Church is one sheepfold under Christ, the good shepherd. *Gospel.*—The safety we enjoy therein.

Morning Lesson.—The guilt and fatal consequences of going astray. *Evening Lesson.*—Purity, meekness, and patience are required of Christ's sheep. *Epistle.*

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.....p. 108.

Moses repeats to Israel the Law of the ten commandments, and enjoins them to obey and honour God. *Morning and Evening Lessons.* The duty of christians to adorn their profession in the sight of all men. *Epistle.*—Their hope and comfort under all their trials. *Gospel.*

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER. ..p. 109.

Our whole heart must be devoted to God, and all our lives consecrated to his service. *Morning and Evening Lessons.*—These heavenly dispositions are imparted by the Holy Ghost. *Gospel.*—The temper in which we should receive and improve the spiritual gifts which our heavenly Father bestows. *Epistle.*

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.....p. 410.

God's goodness and care for Israel, their duty, and the fatal consequence of neglecting it. *Morning Lesson.*—They are warned by their former sins and punishment. *Evening Lesson.*—The practical nature of true religion: Christians are required to be doers, as well as hearers of the Word. *Epistle.*—The means whereby we obtain needful strength; prayer in the name of Christ. *Gospel.*

ASCENSION DAY.....p. 111.

Proper Psalms. The humiliation and triumph of Christ: viii. His glorious ascension; xxiv. xlvii. The character of such as shall rise to dwell with him; xv. xxiv. The honour and dignity to which he is exalted, and the overthrow of his enemies; xxi. His sovereignty and conquests; cviii. His universal dominion, xlvii.

His ascension to heaven, whence he had descended, and shall once again come with his glory; *Second Morning and Evening Lessons; Epistle and Gospel.*

Moses going up the Mount to receive the Law: the succession of the High priesthood: the separation of a particular tribe to the ministry; and the substance of the obedience which God requires. *Morning Lesson.*—The translation of Elijah, and the succession of Elisha to his master's office and spirit: God avenges indignities offered to his ministers. *Evening Lesson.*—Our Lord's commission to the apostles; *Second Morning Lesson; Epistle and Gospel.*—The objects of the ministerial office, and the unity of the Church. *Second Evening Lesson.*

SUNDAY AFTER ASCENSION DAY....p. 118.

Our Lord encourages his disciples to be steadfast through all opposition, promising the Comforter for their help and guidance. *Gospel.*—The gift and office of the Ministry is to be exercised only according to God's appointment. *Epistle.*—Israel is required to worship in God's appointed place; to observe his appointed ministers; and to do in all things according to his word. *Morning Lesson.*—The national welfare depends upon national truth and purity; which every one therefore is required to promote and enforce. *Evening Lesson.*

SECTION VIII. WHITSUNTIDE.

At this season we observe the operations of the Holy Ghost in establishing the Church of Christ; the circumstances of whose descent on the day of Pentecost are related on *Whitsunday.* On *Monday,* we learn the nature and right use of spiritual gifts; and on *Tuesday,* consider their permanent influence on the Church. The doctrinal portion of the yearly service is then completed on *Trinity Sunday,* when we "acknowledge the glory of the eternal Trinity, and worship the Unity in the power of the divine Majesty."

WHITSUNDAY. .....p. 121.

The feast of Pentecost to be observed. *Morning Lesson.*—The spiritual blessings which shall prevail in Christ's kingdom. *Evening Lesson.*—Christ promises to the disciples that he will send the Comforter. *Gospel.*—who descends visibly on the day of Pentecost. *Epistle*—and who is given to the Gentiles. *Second Morning Lesson.*—Baptism is the appointed means whereby we receive the Holy Ghost: the presumption of such as attempt the work of God, unsent. *Second Evening Lesson.*

Proper Psalms. The safety and glory of the Church, xlviii. The progress of the Church, from the deliverance of Israel, to the complete triumph of the Gospel. lxviii. Praise to God for the richness and variety of his gifts. civ. His saints adore Him for the far more exceeding excellence of his spiritual blessings. cxlv.

MONDAY IN WHITSUN-WEEK.....p. 123.

The confusion of tongues at Babel. *Morning Lesson.*—The ordination of the seventy elders. *Evening Lesson.*—Spiritual gifts are diverse, and divided among the Church, that unity may be maintained by the mutual dependence of the members. *Second Morning Lesson.*—They are given, not for vain glory, but that they may be used to edification. *Second Evening Lesson.*—They who had received the miraculous gifts of the Spirit were still required to be baptized. *Epistle.*—The rejection of christian truth arises, not from deficient evidence and light, but from a corrupt heart that chooses darkness. *Gospel.*

TUESDAY IN WHITSUN-WEEK.....p. 124.

The power of the Spirit to control the heart and purposes of the enemies of God's people. *Morning Lesson.*—The gathering in of the Jews to the Church of Christ foretold. *Evening Lesson.*—Our duties as members of the Church. *Second Morning Lesson.*—The evidence of the Spirit of truth; faith working by love. *Second Evening Lesson.*—The importance of laying on of hands, or confirmation. *Epistle.*—A faithful minister of Christ described. *Gospel.*

TRINITY SUNDAY. ..... p. 126

The concurrence of the Holy Trinity in the work of Creation. *Morning Lesson.*—The appearance of the Lord to Abraham. *Evening Lesson.*—The Three Persons of the Godhead manifested at Christ's baptism. *Second Morning Lesson*—and distinguished. *Second Evening Lesson.*—Their several offices in our salvation. *Gospel.*—The adoration paid by the Cherubim in heaven. *Epistle.*

DIVISION II.

The subjects treated in this division of the year admit of being grouped into sections, though the distinction is not so marked as in the former. The Sundays from the first to the seventh, illustrate our dependence upon God; from the eighth to the eleventh, the work of the Holy Spirit: from the twelfth to the nineteenth, the subjects are connected with the Church: and the Sundays to the end of the year present a summary of our duty and hope as Christians.

SECTION I.

The *first* Sunday after Trinity shews that God is our helper and our strength; and requires holy service, and the exercise of brotherly love. The *second*, that He delivers us in trouble, and requires that we relieve our afflicted brethren. The *third*, the disposition in which we must seek his help, namely, lowliness of heart. The *fourth*, that he is our King and Ruler. The *fifth*, the obedience, and trust He claims. The *sixth*, the means whereby we may be restored to his favour when we have offended. The *seventh*, the penalty of sin, and the reward of righteousness, death and life.

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY..... p. 135.

Joshua's victory over the five Kings. *Morning Lesson.*—Obedience to God's commands the condition of receiving his help, and blessing. *Evening Lesson.* He requires that we love the brethren, for his sake. *Epistle.*—The parable of the rich man and Lazarus.—*Gospel.*

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY... p. 136.

The deliverance of Israel from the oppression of Jabin and Sisera. *Morning and Evening Lessons.*—Our duty to help our brethren, with liberality and self-denial. *Epistle.*—The danger of a worldly spirit; and the poor called to the gospel feast.—*Gospel.*

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY..... p. 137.

The blessing upon the meekness of Hannah; and the judgment upon the wickedness and impudence of Eli's sons. *Morning Lesson.*—The call of Samuel; and the submission of Eli to the sentence pronounced against his house. *Evening Lesson.*—The blessings of humble trust. *Epistle.*—Christ receives sinners, and Heaven rejoices over their repentance. *Gospel.*

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY... p. 138.

The sin of Israel in renouncing God's government, by asking a King. *Morning Lesson.*—Saul condemned for his disobedience to the law of God. *Evening Lesson.*—Mercy and equity enforced. *Gospel.*—Illustrated by the integrity of Samuel. *Morning Lesson.*—We are directed to the future for the recompense of our conduct and present sufferings. *Epistle.*

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY..... p. 139.

The punishment of Saul's disobedience. *Morning Lesson.*—The reward of David's holy confidence. *Evening Lesson.*—The obedience of St. Peter rewarded in the miraculous draught of fishes; the trust of Peter, James, and John, in leaving all to follow Christ. *Gospel.*—Trust in God enforced. *Epistle.*

SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY..... p. 139.

David repents, and obtains mercy. *Morning Lesson.*—The rebels of Israel return to their allegiance: Shimei pardoned. *Evening Lesson.*—God requires the service of the heart. *Gospel.*—Our baptism obliges us to holy obedience. *Epistle.*

SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY...p. 140.

Death the punishment of sin. *Morning and Evening Lessons.*—Death the wages of sin; but eternal life through Christ, the gift of God. *Epistle.*—The spiritual food by which we live, figured in the miracle of the loaves and fishes. *Gospel.*

SECTION II.

The *eighth* Sunday after Trinity explains what is the witness of the Spirit. The *ninth*, shews our dependence upon his help. The *tenth*, how the gifts he bestows for the edification of the Church should be improved, in calling and warning sinners. The *eleventh*, the dispositions, humility, and pride, which favour the receiving, or lead to the rejecting of the truth thus taught.

EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.....p. 141.

They who are the sons of God receive the witness of the spirit of adoption. *Epistle.*—Professions are to be suspected, and tried. *Gospel.*—The evidence is of a practical nature; and shewn, in renouncing sin. *Epistle.*—and in doing righteousness. *Gospel.*—The assertion of the prophet of Bethel, being contrary to the Word of God, ought to have convinced the other of his falsehood. *Morning Lesson.*—The prophet of Judah, and Elijah, proved to be from God, by the accordance of their sayings with his law, and by the works of power which attested them. *Morning and Evening Lessons.*

NINTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.....p. 142.

Elijah's courage and power. *Morning Lesson.*—His weakness and despondency. *Evening Lesson.*—God will give us sufficient help in all temptation. *Epistle.*—We are called to improve the present time, so as to guard against future calamity. *Gospel.*

TENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.....p. 143.

The gifts imparted by the Spirit for the edification of the Church. *Epistle.*—Ministers are to improve them, in teaching and warning sinners; with pity, and with zeal. *Gospel.* — With boldness. *Morning Lesson.*—And with faithfulness. *Evening Lesson.*

ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY. p. 143.

Summary of the truth which Ministers are to teach. *Epistle.*—The pride of human reason. *Morning Lesson.*—Of wickedness and infidelity. *Evening Lesson.*—Of self-righteousness. *Gospel.*—The humility of saving faith. *Morning Lesson.*—Of penitence. *Gospel.*—Of holiness. *Epistle.*—God can bless the lowest and weakest agents. *Morning Lesson.*

SECTION III.

The *twelfth* Sunday after Trinity shews the superior excellency of the dispensation of the Gospel. The *thirteenth*, God's covenant with his people. The *fourteenth*, his judgment upon an unfaithful Church. The *fifteenth*, his claims upon his people as their Father. The *sixteenth*, the authority of his Ministers. The *seventeenth*, the duty of the people. The *eighteenth*, the sufficiency of the help which he gives. The *nineteenth*, the duty of remaining faithful to him, under all trials.

TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY...p. 151.

The superior glory of the Gospel, as a ministration of life, over that of the law. *Epistle.*—The penalties of violating the law shewn, in the extermination of Baal's worshippers. *Morning Lesson.* — And in the captivity of Israel. *Evening Lesson.*—The salvation brought by the Gospel illustrated in the deliverance of Jerusalem from Sennacherib. *Evening Lesson.*—Its spiritual blessings figured, in opening the ears of the deaf, and loosing the tongue of the stammerer. *Gospel.*

THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.....p. 152.

The salvation and promises of God to his Church, for Christ's sake, figured in the deliverance of Jerusalem. *Morning Lesson.*—Josiah and his people covenant to serve God. *Evening Lesson.* — The covenant of God in Christ, given to Abraham, was not annulled by the Law. *Epistle.*—The blessings and the conditions of the Gospel Covenant. *Gospel.*

FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY..... p. 152.

God declares his judgments against unfaithful and guilty Jerusalem. *Morning Lesson.*—And her King. *Evening Lesson.*—The ingratitude of the lepers for Christ's mercy. *Gospel.*—The works of the flesh and of the Spirit stated and contrasted. *Epistle.*

FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY. p. 153.

The disobedience of the Jews to God condemned by the obedience of the Rechabites to Jonadab their father. *Morning Lesson.* — God, striving with his disobedient children, gives them a last warning. *Evening Lesson.* — His providential care, and our duty to trust Him. *Gospel.*—The character of his children. *Epistle.*

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY. p. 154.

The commission of a faithful Minister. *Morning Lesson.*—False teachers condemned. *Evening Lesson.* Ministers are sent, to minister spiritual blessings to God's people. *Epistle.* — And, by the word and power of Christ, to awaken sinners from the death of sin. *Gospel.*

SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY..... p. 155.

The unity of the Church: the tempers that promote it enjoined. *Epistle.* — Those which tend to break it, condemned. *Gospel.*—Personal holiness is required for salvation; and no privileges, or intercession, shall save the guilty person. *Morning and Evening Lessons.*

EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY..... p. 155.

The means of grace which God had given to Israel, and his judgment upon the people and city, for despising them. *Morning and Evening Lessons.*—The completeness of the privileges we enjoy. *Epistle.*—The duties we are required to perform. *Gospel.*—We look for the coming of Christ. *Epistle.* Who is exalted with power over all his enemies. *Gospel.*

NINETEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY..... p. 156.

We are required to abstain from sin, and to do well, notwithstanding evil example. *Epistle.*—The courage of the three children, in refusing to do wrong. *Morning Lesson.*—And of Daniel, in refusing to turn aside from duty. *Evening Lesson.* — God gives needful strength to the weak. *Gospel.*

SECTION IV.

The *twentieth* Sunday calls to prepare for judgment. The *twenty-first*, directs attention to the faith, which overcomes the world. The *twenty-second*, to perseverance. The *twenty-third*, to the Christian's duty and hope. The *twenty-fourth*, to growth in grace. The *twenty-fifth* closes the year, by directing us to Christ, our only dependence.

TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY p. 157.

God sounds an alarm to his Church, and warns his people of his coming. *Morning Lesson.* — His controversy with his people. *Evening Lesson.*—We must receive the invitations of the Gospel, and duly prepare to meet our God. *Gospel.*—The nature of the preparation required. *Epistle.*

TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY ..... p. 157.

The faith and reward of the righteous, and the miserable end of the worldly-minded, and sinners. *Morning and Evening Lessons.*—The whole armour of God, in which the christian is called to fight. *Epistle.*—The compassion of Christ in strengthening the faith of the weak. *Gospel.*

TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY .....p. 159.

Perseverance in the way of life and wisdom enforced. *Morning and Evening Lessons.*—The Apostle's confidence that the Philippians will persevere to the end, and the ground for it. *Epistle.*—Though God have forgiven us our debt, yet we may provoke Him by renewed sin to cast us from his mercy. *Gospel.*

TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY .....p. 160.

The consequences of good and bad conduct. *Morning and Evening Lessons.*—The conduct and pursuits of evil and worldly minded persons; and the duty and hope of the Christian. *Epistle.*—While the Christian's heart is in heaven, he is yet required to perform strictly all worldly duties. *Gospel.*

TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY .....p. 168.

The conduct of good and bad men. *Morning and Evening Lessons.*—The Apostle, commending the Colossians for their Christian progress, desires that they may still go forward. *Epistle.*—Christ is our life and our strength. *Gospel.*

TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY ..... p. 169.

God sees and governs all things, and we depend upon his guidance and blessing. *Morning and Evening Lessons.*—The promise of Christ, and the glorious deliverance he should effect for his people. *Epistle.*—He is acknowledged by the multitude to be the prophet foretold by Moses. *Gospel.*

CONTENTS OF CHURCH AND DISSENT.

INTRODUCTION.——p. 3.

Objects and strength of the Movement party.

Derives its chief power from Dissent.

Necessary, therefore, that Dissent should be well understood.

The Voluntary principle is identical with democracy.

CHAPTER I.—The Church and Dissent, their nature and essential differences ..... p. 3.

Essentials of the Christian Church, according to the Church of England;—nature and government of congregational, or dissenting churches;—the principles of the two are entirely opposite;—both, therefore, cannot be of Divine appointment.

The Voluntary principle, its nature, and destructive tendency.

Nature of an Established Church.

Intercommunion between the Church and Dissent impracticable;—inconsistency of dissenters in seeking it;—unions between different sects can preserve peace only by sacrificing religion;—illustrations.

Arguments drawn from history in support of the Church waved in the present inquiry;—the practical operation of conflicting principles a decisive test of their source, and nature.

CHAPTER II.—The Church and Dissent, considered in their accordance with the christian system.....p. 17.

The leading principles of the Christian system applied to the Church, and Dissent, as a test.

Comprehensiveness:—the Church is comprehensive;—Dissent is exclusive.

Order:—regular subordination in the Church.—All are heads in Dissent;—quarrels and secessions;—these justifiable upon dissenting principles.

The dignity and authority of the Christian ministry:—the credit of the clergy is admitted, and complained of by their enemies;—Dissenting ministers;—their miserably helpless, dependent, and subservient position.

The corruption of mankind:—fatal to the principle of voluntary churches;—how. Safety afforded by a Church;—nature of this security.

CHAPTER III.—God's care of the Church of England shewn in her history.... p. 33 & 49.

Leading events in the history of the Church and Nation, from the Reformation to the present time, shewing that everything has been over-ruled for good.

CHAPTER IV.—The Church and Dissent, their influence on the personal character .... p. 65.

Influence respectively of the monarchical and republican principles;—of the clergy and dissenting ministers;—of churches, and meeting-houses.

Moral influence of the Church and Dissent.

CHAPTER V.—The Church and Dissent, their influence on society ..... p. 73.

Society compared to a family;—religion the only sure foundation of happiness and prosperity;—home the source of the social virtues;—important that intimacies should be select;—essential that the distinctions of society should be preserved;—good feeling among all classes desirable.

Manner in which the Church promotes, and the Voluntary system interferes with these objects.

CHAPTER VI.—The Church and Dissent, their influence on the national character.... p. 97.

Orderly principles of the Church;—Democratic principles of Dissent.

Literature, its influence;—depends on the clergy;—dissenting academies.

Political power and influence of England;—the Church an effectual means of increasing and confirming it.

Connexion of democracy with infidelity and profligacy.

CHAPTER VII.—The Church and Dissent, their influence on religion..... p. 113.

Objects of an institution for the religious instruction of the Country.

I. To set forth the Scriptures.

II. To instruct every part of the Country.

III. The religious education of the young.

IV. To preserve the truth in times of difficulty and corruption.

V. To promote personal religion.

VI. To afford help and comfort to those who, otherwise, would be deprived of the blessings of Christian communion.

VII. To control those who neglect the services and duties of religion.

The Church secures—Dissent fails in all these.

CHAPTER VIII.—The Duty of Churchmen at the present Crisis ..... p. 145.

Reason why Dissent, as a system, must always have a hurtful tendency;—nothing to be gained by compromise.

Grievances of Dissenters considered.

CHAPTER IX.—The Claims of the Poor, and the Duty of the State.....p. 161.

Lamentable destitution of the poor;—Responsibility of the State;—importance of determined and persevering exertion to compel the State to recognize and do its duty as a Christian Government;—certainty of eventual and complete success.

INDEX TO THE HYMNS.

	No.	Page.
Abba, Father, while we sing	52	141
Almighty God! the pure and just	58	153
And have we heard the joyful sound	54	143
Arm, Christian, arm, the foe's abroad	65	159
Awed by a mortal's frown, shall I	20	86
Blest be thy happy morn	4	32
Brought to the Font with holy care.....	62	156
Christ for ev'ry man hath died.....	33	110
Come, let us search our hearts and try	48	138
Come, magnify the Saviour's love	18	84
Father, 'tis thine each day to yield.....	59	154
Father, whose love and truth fulfil	43	128
Glory to God! with joyful adoration	5	32
God is our strength! away our fear	49	139
Great God! o'er heaven and earth supreme..	46	137
Great God! whose awful mystery	42	128
His kingdom comes! ye saints rejoice	1	16
How happy is the quiet breast	15	81
I hold the sacred book of God	63	157
In deep distress to God I cried	45	137
Jehovah hath spoken! the Nations shall hear	2	16
Jesus, hear the sinner's cry	51	141
Jesus, refuge of thy people	69	169
Lamb of God, whose dying love	23	90

	No.	Page.
Let God with awful pomp arise	38	123
Lo! from his place, with glorious state surrounded	64	157
Lo! where the words of Wisdom shine	67	160
Lord, how I love thy holy law	13	78
Lord of the Church, we humbly pray	35	112
Lord, on whose bounty we depend	16	82
Lord, that I may learn of Thee	55	144
Maker of all things, mighty Lord	7	48
May we thy precepts, Lord, fulfil	61	155
My Maker, and my King	44	136
O God of love! to Thee our prayers arise	11	64
O God, the high and holy One	47	138
O God, unseen, but ever near	27	94
O God, whose mercy, truth, and love	14	80
O grant me, Lord, myself to see	66	160
O help us, Lord! in all our need	53	142
O Thou, in heaven and earth adored	8	64
Oh, may our lips and lives express	68	169
Oh, the Almighty Lord	56	151
Pardon'd through redeeming grace	29	96
Praise to the Lord who left the sky	3	32
Saviour, whom our hearts adore	17	83
Saviour, whose love could stoop to death	21	87
Set in a high and favour'd place	34	111
That holy rite, that solemn vow	24	91
The Lord! in Him I put my trust	12	78
The Lord, the Mighty God is great	57	152
The pastor's voice we loved to hear	36	112
Thee I'll extol, O God, my King	6	48
Thee we adore, Almighty Lord	32	109
Thou friend of sinners, who hast bought	50	140
Thus we confess the Saviour's love	22	89
Thy sacred influence, Lord, impart	39	124
To bring me to this hallow'd shrine	40	126
To God the Father, God the Son	41	128
Truths, which prophets sought in vain	10	64
Victorious from the dreadful fight	19	85
Wake from the dead! new life begin	9	64
We stand on hallow'd ground	60	154
When Israel forth from Egypt went	25	92
When sorrows vex and foes oppress	31	108
Why should we shrink at Nature's doom	26	93
Within thy Temple's hallow'd bound	37	120
Wo to the Earth when God shall rise	28	95
Worship, honor, glory, blessing	70	170
Your hearts and tongues, ye saints employ	30	96

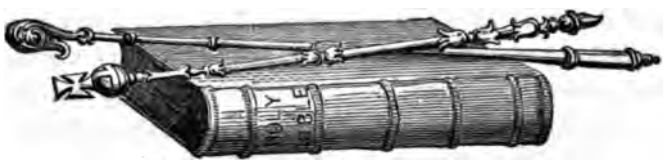
SUBJECTS OF THE HYMNS.

Adoration of God 5, 6, 7, 8, 16, 25, 38, 47, 70
Praise to the Saviour . . . 1, 3, 4, 17, 18, 19, 21, 33, 51, 69
The Holy Spirit. 30, 33, 39
The Trinity 41, 42, 43
The Bible 13, 63, 67
The Church and its Ministers, 9, 35, 37, 38, 39, 40, 56, 57, 60
Baptism 24, 29, 40, 43, 62
Confirmation 10, 65
The Holy Communion . . . 22, 23, 27, 29
Repentance 11, 34, 58
Faith and Trust 7, 12, 20, 31, 45, 49, 53, 59
Perseverance 66
Love to God 10, 15, 50
Love to Man 10, 39, 44, 46, 61
Humility 18, 55
Christian duties 14, 32, 46, 48, 54, 67, 68
Christian privileges . . . 15, 30, 47, 50, 52
Death 26, 36
Judgment 2, 28, 64

Some of these Hymns have been adapted from other writers; all, however, very greatly altered: indeed, few retain so much as a stanza of their original. The Authors, of whose Works I have thus availed myself, are, Brady and Tate, 6, and 57; Wesley, 20, 23, 28, 29, 33, 35, 50, 55, and 67; Watts, 48, 56, and 68; Doddridge, 7; Steele, 44; Milman, 53; Bickersteth, 54; and Toplady, 66.

AN EXPLANATION OF SOME PARTS OF THE CATECHISM.....p. 170.

CHURCH AND KING.



"FEAR GOD—HONOUR THE KING."

No. I. NOVEMBER 1, 1836.

INTRODUCTION.

If the views of Conservatives extended only to a party triumph, little would remain for them but to take the prize. Their high character; the confidence, and unanimity they display; and the despondency and dissensions which their opponents can no longer conceal, give them undeniable ascendancy; and if they delay to use their power as they might, it is only to make their victory the more decisive.

But when the blessings of peace and order shall thus have been secured, there will yet remain an object of the highest consequence. None can observe the state of the poor in our large towns without deeply lamenting the social and moral evils which press upon them; and it requires no argument to prove that all the interests of society must deeply suffer, while this large and important class remains sunk below their proper condition, and estranged from those who ought to be their friends and leaders.

In the Church we have an effectual, indeed the only means, of raising them to that social importance, and moral character, which may, and ought to be theirs; and of uniting all classes of society in harmony, and just subordination. Our business, therefore, is not merely to maintain the Church, as a bulwark against revolutionary innovation, but also to call forth, and apply her energies to those great objects, which by her alone we shall be able to accomplish.

To illustrate this truth, I lately published a little volume, entitled "The Church and Dissent, considered in their practical influence." I did not spare to expose the destructive tendency of the latter; because it was necessary to present in contrast the monarchical and the republican principles, of which the Church and Dissent are respectively the supporters: but I confined my animadversions to the *system* of Dissent, carefully avoiding all party acrimony, and whatever might give pain to individuals. I rested my arguments, chiefly, upon the principles contended for, and facts not denied by dissenters themselves — every reader may judge how far they warrant the conclusions.

I republish it in its present form of a periodical, at the request of the Bath Conservative Association, who think it desirable that the work should be made more generally accessible; and I hope greatly to increase its interest and usefulness, by combining with it an exposition of the services appointed by the

Church, in a manner which shall prove how fully she has provided for the right instruction of her disciples.

The protection of the State affords to the Church the means of instructing the country. Her canons are for orderly government; and her articles, to exclude dangerous error; but her religion is the Bible, and the Bible only. The reading of the Scriptures forms the chief part of her services; and every doctrine she teaches, all the discipline she maintains, and every duty she enforces, is set forth in a clear and orderly manner, in the lessons, and other portions of Scripture, appointed to be read on Sundays and holidays through the year.

We gain an argument of no small importance, by connecting all the tenets of the Church with the Scriptures, as set forth in her services. With a very few unimportant variations, the epistle and gospel as now used, were appointed, and, as there is reason to believe, by St. Jerome, in the fourth century. We have, therefore, the most direct and conclusive proof that the Church holds the faith, as it was taught in the purest ages of Christianity, and centuries before Rome advanced a claim to supremacy.

The general connexion of the lessons with the epistle and gospel has not been noticed, that I am aware of, by any one who has written on the Liturgy. We may wonder that so important a fact should have been overlooked; but the connexion will be found so clear, as to leave no doubt that it was designed. Indeed, the lessons are very often necessary to explain the right sense and application of the other parts of the service.

This connexion was traced in preparing a volume of psalms and hymns, which was lately published by the editor of the "Christian Remembrancer," and in which I took a very active part. As it was determined that the hymns should illustrate the services of the Church, the first step was to make a complete analysis of these services; and the connexion between all the parts for each day was so striking, that we went over the whole a second, third, and fourth time.

I need not insist on the importance of this point. All must agree that the Sabbath will be the most profitably employed, when there is a fixed subject for religious meditation; and that the services of the Church will be doubly delightful, when it is seen how they illustrate this subject. Nor can there be a stronger security against errors in religion, which generally arise from partial views of doctrine, than by calling the attention of the people to a complete system of divinity, through which they are led, step by step, in the course of every year, and which may be made interesting and intelligible even to young children.

Each Number of the present publication will contain a chapter of "The Church and Dissent;" two of the longer chapters being divided; and a series of essays to illustrate the services for every Sunday and holiday, to be entitled, "The Church established on the Bible." Care will be taken that these shall always anticipate the days to which they apply; and to effect this, a supplementary number may be necessary for the services in Passion week. The work will also contain about seventy or eighty original psalms and hymns. A plain exposition of the Catechism, in which each clause will be referred to those parts of the service which bear upon it, will be given in the latter numbers.

The title, "Church and King," is not chosen as a party watchword, but because it embodies our most important public duties. God has appointed both, to govern under Him, and with His authority, the Church in spiritual, the King in temporal affairs; and we ought, cheerfully for his sake, and gratefully for our own, to receive each with obedience, reverence, and love.

THE CHURCH AND DISSENT,

CONSIDERED IN THEIR PRACTICAL INFLUENCE.

WHILE the Papists of Ireland are contending for supremacy in that Country, the English dissenters are striving to effect a great change in the constitution of our Established Church. The proposed change extends to fundamental principles; and, if carried into effect, would, as we firmly believe, produce the most disastrous consequences.

The influence of the parties thus hostile to the Church is, at the present moment, very great. It is notorious that his Majesty's ministers are indebted for office entirely to their support; while the clergy and laity of the Church, with but few exceptions, utterly distrust them. A Government far less disposed than the present to make great sacrifices for the sake of office, would naturally desire to strengthen friends, and to depress political opponents; a consideration calculated to excite apprehensions, which the actual conduct of the Government has not tended to allay.

Formidable as the Popish confederacy in Ireland may appear, it is certain that the chief power of the Movement is derived from English Dissent. It is principally by the votes and influence of dissenters, that the English members are so nearly balanced, as to enable the Irish majority to turn the scale, and, in effect, to command the Government. Ireland would soon be tranquil, if England were united. The result of the noble firmness and integrity of the Judges proves that the law is effectual, if the Government only dared to do its duty.

It is therefore highly important that Dissent, its nature, tendency, and strength, should now be fully understood: and I think it my duty to undertake this inquiry, because very few persons can have possessed equal opportunities of becoming acquainted with it. I have been enabled to observe it closely for the last thirty years: I was brought up a dissenter; educated under the roof of a dissenting minister; and have had those means of knowing the personal and domestic character and habits of individuals, in all ranks, and of all opinions, which only a medical practitioner can obtain. I propose, therefore, as briefly as possible, and always in the most temperate language, to state what I have observed, carefully avoiding whatever is not material to the argument: and after pointing out the essential principles of the Church and of Dissent, to trace their respective influence upon individuals, society, and the nation.

The inquiry has an interest beyond that which arises from the consideration of conflicting religious systems; for as the Voluntary Principle of Dissent is identical with Democracy in politics, so the principles which support the Church are the foundation and safeguard of the Throne. If the Movement should so far succeed, WHICH THEY WILL NOT, as to set aside these principles, the constitutional authority of the Crown would soon be resented as tyranny, and its due splendour rejected as costly folly.

CHAPTER I.

The Church and Dissent, their Nature, and Essential Differences.

THE essentials of a Christian Church, according to our views, are stated generally in the 19th and 23rd Articles. They consist in the setting forth of God's pure word, and the right administration of the sacraments, by a duly appointed ministry; the authority of such a ministry being derived from our Lord's commission to the apostles, transmitted by episcopal succession; and residing in a threefold order of bishops, priests, and deacons. All baptized persons, except those excluded by ecclesiastical discipline, are members of the Church; and the general assembly throughout the world of such persons, with their duly commissioned ministry, is the Catholic, or universal Church; of which every particular, or national Church, possessing these essentials, is a part.

According to the system of Dissent, every meeting-house contains a church, which is complete within itself, and entirely independent of every other. This "church" is formed in the first place by the voluntary union of a number of professing Christians, who are called

"church members," and is continued by the admission, from time to time, of candidates, who, after due inquiry, are considered to afford satisfactory evidence of piety, and of accordance with the tenets of the sect. All authority is vested in this select body. They alone admit, or exclude members; and appoint, govern, or dismiss the minister. The rest of the congregation, who are called "hearers," are allowed no voice in the government of the Meeting, and are not even permitted to receive the communion. The "members" transact their business at "church-meetings," which are held monthly, with closed doors; all questions being determined by vote, and every member having an equal voice. The will of the majority for the time being is the only law in all matters of business, discipline, and doctrine; necessarily so, because every "church" is distinct, and independent; and no external authority can have the right or power to interfere. The ministers take their office upon themselves, nothing being required except that they shall find a "church" willing to receive them. Their ordination, as it is called, is not the authority by which they exercise their office, but only their formal recognition as the stated ministers of particular congregations; and is repeated with every change. They are subjected in all things to the will of the "church," and hold their appointment only during pleasure. Generally, they are educated for the ministry, but this is not essential. They often step at once from a handicraft trade to the pulpit; or attend to both together; or return from the pulpit to trade, should they not succeed as ministers. The deacons are secular officers, who transact the business of the Meeting under the direction of the "church." As to the sacraments, baptism is regarded as a mere initiatory rite, which confers no privilege whatever, except among the Anti-Pædobaptists, or Baptists, as they are usually called, with whom it precedes the ceremony of admission into the "church," whose permission, given by vote at a "church-meeting," is always required before the candidate can be allowed to receive it. Only members are admitted to the communion, which is received sitting, the elements being handed round to the pews. The prayers and sermon are extempore; but in Lady Huntingdon's connexion generally, and in a few of the more respectable congregations among the Independents, the Liturgy is also admitted. The minister's salary, and other charges, are usually met by pew-rents, and voluntary contributions. This, however, arises only from necessity, and not from any scruple as to the lawfulness of endowments; as we have lately seen in the Chancery suit for the property left by Lady Hewley.

Thus it is evident that no two systems can be more opposite in all things than the Church and Dissent. Their principles are utterly irreconcileable. The one vests authority in the minister: the other, in the people. The one acknowledges no man to be a minister, unless he have been appointed by lawful authority: the other permits any man to take the office upon himself. The one is comprehensive: the other, select and exclusive. The system of the Church is unity, which, by its catholic principle, may extend to the whole world: that of Dissent is division, which sets up a number of distinct, rival, and perhaps hostile "churches" in a single town. Both cannot possibly be of Divine appointment.

It is certain from Scripture that God has appointed a perpetual Church; nor can we doubt that whatever He appoints must have some fixed principle. God is not the author of confusion, nor can He contradict himself. Every man therefore, having duly satisfied his judgment and his conscience upon this point, ought to take a decided stand upon his own ground; not as a question of expediency, but for conscience sake. No compromise can be safe between a Divine appointment, and a human invention. The principle which sanctions error is not charity, but weakness. Truth, and error; right, and wrong; duty, and rebellion; admit of no alliance.

The dissenter, however, while he professes to believe in a Church, contends that no *mode* of church government has been appointed; and consequently, that all sects, the Church included, stand on the same footing, that is, on the opinion and choice of individuals. Upon this principle, the dissenter, regarding the Church as one of many sects, all holding the faith of Christ, and equal in authority, may consistently recognize and unite with her, for it would undoubtedly be very wrong to allow a difference of opinion on lesser points to estrange parties who agree in all essentials. But

this principle evidently destroys all the authority of a Christian church, and reduces it to a mere voluntary association of professing Christians. No churchman can sanction this without being false to his principles, for he would thus surrender every point at issue. The Church teaches, with the Bible for her authority, that all Government, both ecclesiastical and civil, is appointed by God, to be obeyed for conscience sake. Dissent contends that the right of any government is derived from the appointment, or consent, of the parties to be governed, which necessarily includes the right of the sovereign people to reclaim, or resist, the authority they confer; an assertion utterly subversive of all government, and, therefore, contradictory to the very idea of a Church. If the Church be right, the voluntary principle is rebellion against God; by teaching men to usurp his power, and resist those who govern by his delegated authority.

The voluntary principle, of which so much has lately been said and written, is very imperfectly understood. Most people imagine that it only asserts the right of every individual to pay for the instruction which he prefers, with a protest against being compelled to pay for any other. But in reality it includes the whole question at issue. It claims for every man the right to choose for himself his mode of worship, and form of church government, and to make himself sole judge of the nature and extent of the obedience he shall render: in other words, that every man shall do that which is right in his own eyes, determine for himself what laws he will obey, submit to no authority which he has not sanctioned, and revolt against this whenever it pleases him to do so. This principle strikes at the foundation of society itself; for it contains nothing which may forbid its application to civil, as well as to ecclesiastical institutions.

It is not surprising, however, that the voluntary principle should have become identified with pecuniary considerations, because it is very greatly controlled by the purse. The command of the funds materially determines the government of the Meeting; and though the authority of the church members is the first principle of independency, it is superseded, by that of trustees, if the Meeting be endowed; by a committee of strangers, *if it* be supported by funds from without. If the minister be poor, the "church" governs him: if he have property, or influential connexions, he dictates to them. The voluntary principle resolves itself, in fact, into the right of the strongest;

> "And why—because the good old rule
> Sufficeth them; the simple plan
> That they should take, who have the power;
> That they should keep, who can."

The advocates of this principle urge the inviolable rights of conscience. Conscience is entitled to all respect whenever it can be truly pleaded; but when the pretensions are so extensive, it is necessary to inquire if it be really conscience that makes the claim. Let it be remembered that it is a leading object of government to control and prevent the mistaken or mischievous designs of individuals; and that the exercise of this power will naturally offend him who is checked. How then shall it be known whether the motive which prompts to resistance be indeed conscience; and not taste, or pride, or impatience of just restraint? The answer is clear. No man can be suffered to be a law unto himself, because God has given a law, to which all men are required to bring every thought into subjection: and those scruples alone are to be deemed conscientious which agree with the Word of God. To this it may be replied, that every individual must interpret that Word for himself. But whatever obscurity may exist upon points not necessary to be fully understood in this life, there is none in the precepts which enjoin practical duties. If he turn away from these, or pervert them with specious sophistry that he may excuse his own inclinations, he is governed, not by conscience, but by an evil heart. But no precepts are more emphatic, and expressed in words which less admit of subterfuge, than those which enjoin obedience to rulers, and enforce the duty by the declaration, that God has committed to them the authority they bear. The circumstances under which these precepts were written leave the caviller without excuse. A monster of wickedness filled the imperial throne; yet St. Paul wrote, "Let every soul be subject to the higher powers." It was not for those whom he addressed to inquire for what object of discipline or punishment God suffered

such a tyrant to live and reign. Their business was to do their duty as subjects, and commit judgment to the Sovereign Lord and Judge of all. The heathen temples were supported from the revenues of the State; yet the Apostle enjoined Christians to pay the tribute which the State required. It was not their concern that others misapplied it. Only where they would break the Law of God by their obedience, was it their duty to disobey; but this, so far from being an exception, is a necessary consequence of the other; for no subordinate and delegated authority may claim obedience for itself, in opposition to the Supreme Power which appoints and governs it. He, therefore, who disobeys in any case where he may comply without sin, may act from ignorance, self-will, or pride; but certainly not from conscience.

As the military and the judicial authorities in the State represent their common Sovereign, whose majesty is outraged when either is resisted, so the civil and ecclesiastical powers, each with its own authority, are ordained by God, in whose name, and for whose sake, each must be obeyed. The Church is a divine institution. The State may protect, or may oppress it: but can neither give, nor take away its power; for the civil ruler has no spiritual jurisdiction to control the belief, or conscience of subjects. (Art. 37.) What, then, is meant by an established Church? It is that, which the State recognizes and reverences, as representing the divine authority, before which all men, whether rulers or subjects, are required to bow;—that, which the State furnishes with the means of imparting the religious instruction which a Christian Government is bound to provide for all its subjects,—and which the State duly protects and honours in the performance of its important duties.

An established Church derives nothing from the State but its means of usefulness: its authority and commission must be from God. If it be so mistaken, corrupt, or opposed to the truth of the Bible, that Christians cannot remain in its communion without neglecting what God has appointed, disobeying what He has commanded, or doing what He has forbidden, it is their duty to separate: for neither can the protection of the State give authority to error, nor persecution weaken the claims of truth. But all who thus separate ought to be very sure that their motives are such as the Bible justifies, lest they become guilty of causing needless divisions: and in all cases they are bound to take care, that by their meekness, their quiet firmness in doing right, their dutiful submission in suffering the consequences, and the honour and obedience they cheerfully offer to their rulers, they may vindicate before all men the purity of their motives. "For so is the will of God, that with well-doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: as free, and not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. Honour all men: love the brotherhood: fear God: honour the King."

We are fortunate in having an example how Christians may lawfully separate from an established Church; and how they ought to behave in their separation. The Episcopalians of Scotland thus separate, because they deem themselves bound to remain in a communion governed by the apostolic order of bishops, which the national Establishment has lost, or rejected. Their principle rests upon the plain duty of obeying, at all events, that spiritual authority which God has appointed from the foundation of his Church, whether it be recognized, or neglected; established, or persecuted, by the civil power. But they acquiesce without murmuring in the poverty and obscurity to which their nonconformity exposes them; and they make no attempt to disturb the existing arrangements of the Country. They separate, not because Presbyterianism is established by the State, but because Episcopacy has been ordained by God; and since obedience for conscience sake, under whatever trials or discouragement, has been their ruling principle, we cannot wonder, however we may admire, at the noble example they display of uncomplaining meekness, and devoted loyalty. They who are true to God will always be loyal to their King. Far otherwise they, who, deeming all orthodox sects indifferent, and of equal authority in themselves, yet contend, that if the State sanction any one of them, that one ought therefore to be resisted. Thus they canonize rebellion; and truly they honour their patron saint.

The voluntary principle, in as far as it

would make the ministrations of the Church of God a matter of hiring and service, is contemptible: in striking at the foundation of all authority, is most dangerous. But its advocates advance a plea which at first seems plausible:—that there should be no terms of communion beyond what are terms of salvation. This is the most respectable form in which the principle can be asserted, because, instead of resting upon a mercenary motive, or the right of rebellion, it appeals to Christianity, and insists on the illiberality of refusing to worship God on earth, in communion with those with whom we hope to praise Him in heaven. But the plea will not bear a moment's scrutiny. For if God have appointed a Church, as the visible means to preserve his truth, and to exercise his spiritual authority upon earth, we dare not depart from its essentials, nor sanction those who do. Articles of faith, and the authority of a Church, have the same connexion and distinction as that which exists between private and public duties. The observance of the one does not excuse the violation of the other. As the most exemplary private life would not save a well-meaning enthusiast from the penalties of treason, so no man's orthodoxy can entitle him to be countenanced by the Church while he despises and resists her authority.

The distinction between religion and a Church; that is, between the truth we ought practically to believe, and the authority appointed to teach and enforce it, may be best understood by showing them as they exist apart from one another. Popery and Dissent respectively will afford the necessary illustrations.

Popery, amidst the multitude of her inventions, so far preserves the essentials of Christian faith, that all Protestants believe salvation to be attainable in her communion; and she possesses the orders, and the apostolic succession of the ministry. We do not therefore dispute her claim to be considered as a branch, utterly corrupt it is true, but still a branch, of the Christian Church. But, without alluding to the arrogant pretensions of an Italian monk to authority within this realm of England, which we spurn with contempt, we utterly condemn the inventions, of auricular confession, as abominable; of purgatory and indulgences, as fraudulent; of transubstantiation, the invocation of saints, and the worship of images, as superstitious, and idolatrous. Her assertion of the authority of tradition, and general councils, in opposition to God's Word, we denounce as presumptuous rebellion against God; and the pretence of good works as a meritorious cause of salvation, with whatever else may detract from the great doctrine of justification only by faith in Christ, as a deadly heresy. We shudder at the blasphemy which claims divine attributes and power for the Pope. We abhor the wickedness which pretends to sanctify fraud, perjury, and all manner of cruelties and crimes, when committed for the interests of the Church. And we assert, in opposition to the dark policy which her corruptions have forced upon her, the absolute right of every man to possess the Bible; to hear it, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest, all that it contains. Popery is a Church without religion.

Orthodox Dissent holds the essentials of Christian faith;—the fall, corruption, and helplessness of man, salvation only by faith in Christ, and our dependence on the continual help of the Holy Spirit. Thus far we agree. But Dissent has no ministry; for that is not a ministry which any man may assume and lay aside at pleasure:—it has no authority; for there can be none, where every man is made, in all things, his own judge:—it possesses no unity; for how should unity exist, where every man is encouraged to give full scope to his own inventions? It is a religion without a Church.

No community can preserve peace and order without some regulations, which its members must be required to observe; nor can it be endured that a candidate for admission shall dictate his own terms, and expect the whole society to defer to him. Consistently with preserving order and decency, it is not easy to conceive how the terms of communion in the Church can be made more liberal. She throws wide open her doors, and offers her ministrations to all who will receive them; imposing no tests beyond what are necessary to secure the essentials of religion and government, and nothing which ought to be felt as a grievance by any honest and sound Christian. If dissenters refuse to enter, it is they who reject the Church, not the Church which excludes them.

The conditions of friendship which dissenters offer to the Church, are nothing less than the absolute surrender of all her essential principles:—that she should recognize the validity of lay ordination, acknowledge the principle of independency, and unite with all sects on terms of equality. "Three points," says Dr. Pye Smith, confessedly the most moderate of all dissenters, "free intercommunion in *public prayer*, *pulpit services*, and the *Lord's table*, might, I humbly think, and fervently hope, be established, without wounding any man's conscience."

How is this intercommunion to be obtained? Is it to extend to all orthodox sects, and open our churches and pulpits to every labourer who licenses himself as a minister, and his cottage as a Meeting? Or, restricting it to the stated ministers of respectable congregations, are we to go to church to hear an extempore prayer from the dissenting minister, while the clergyman and clerk are gone to read the Liturgy in the meeting-house? Are we to kneel around the altar, and receive the Holy Communion from the hands of a layman, while the churchwardens are handing round the elements to a party of dissenters sitting in the pews? The proposal is too extravagant and absurd for serious argument.

Upon what plea can dissenters desire this intercommunion with the Church, which does not condemn them for refusing her ministrations? If they can worship in her occasionally, why not always? If they deem the differences too material, and that she is wrong wherever they differ, why should they desire her sanction, and offer theirs? If they can join in her worship without wounding their conscience, they stand self-convicted of schism by their needless separation. If they think that her corruption and error forbid this, they are greatly inconsistent in offering occasional conformity. What would be thought of the Church, if she were to offer or consent to such intercommunion with Popery?

Dr. Pye Smith, in the Appendix to a Sermon published last year, "On the Temper to be cultivated by Christians of different Denominations towards each other," says of the Church and the Clergy, "Personal religion and official devotedness, such as correspond with your ordination and consecration forms, are *not the rule*, but are the *exception*. When we hear of a new incumbent, or a new bishop, it is the ordinary apprehension that he is a worldly-minded man, who would never have entered the ministry, but for the selfish and flesh-pleasing expectancies connected with it; but, when we learn that *he is*, in any good degree, what his ordination vows have pledged him to be, we 'rejoice as one that hath found great treasure;'—we bless God as for a blessing out of the way of reasonable hope. Take the Clergy of England and Wales at fifteen thousand,—can we delight ourselves with the hope that more than three thousand are 'faithful men of God?' And this is not the state of things at a period of great declension, or under any singular or unfavourable circumstances; but at the most happy and promising time of a holy revival that the Church of England has ever known!—Again, I say, and with sincerest grief, *godliness is the exception, ungodliness the rule;* and this is the state of things which is PRODUCED *with all the certainty of effect* that can belong to moral causes, *by the very constitution, and most cherished arrangements of your Church.*"—p. 87, 88.

Dr. Smith is the individual most eminent for learning and character in all Dissent; and he has been so far from going the lengths of his brethren in their hostility to the Church, that, as it is well known, he has been considered by all parties, and has himself desired that he should be regarded, as friendly towards her. If these, his lately recorded sentiments, be dissenting friendship, what must be dissenting hostility!

Why should dissenters desire intercommunion with the Church, if she be so corrupt, and the Clergy so wicked? Rather they should leave her to perish in her own corruption, while they fervently strive, by the unobtrusive exercise of every Christian grace and duty, to advance their own purity; that so, by the example of a people truly fearing and serving God, the Church might be awakened to shame and repentance; or if not, that true religion may still flourish in the land, and save it from the judgments which a guilty Church must at length call down. If, as they say, their object be to reform the Church, such conduct would be far more effectual than unchristian virulence, and political agitation.

This plea of intercommunion, like all the others, resolves itself into obtaining a recogni-

tion of the voluntary principle; an attempt to destroy by sap, the Church, which her enemies are not strong enough to overthrow. She is safe, as long as she is true to herself; nor will the fiercest assaults of her enemies shake her bulwarks, unless treachery and corruption should aid them from within.

But let her once acknowledge the validity of lay orders, and the equality of all sects, and by the very act she will have cast off her allegiance to God. Then she would truly be a mere "State Church," having no advantage but that which she derives from the favour of the State. And when a Radical House of Commons should have reversed this, the next easy step would be for the majority of the parishioners to determine what sect shall possess the parish church; or perhaps, for this is a scheme with some classes of liberals, that the parish church shall be the common property of all, from the Episcopalian to the Socinian, to be occupied every Sunday by their different congregations in succession.

Might it not have been expected, that, while dissenters claim such large concessions from the Church, they would display liberality towards one another? Yet the Independents, and the Baptists, who agree in doctrine, discipline, mode of worship, in every point except one, which both agree to be not essential,—the question whether baptism should be administered to infants or not, and whether by sprinkling, or immersion,— are so completely separated by this one difference, that they cannot meet at the Lord's table; for the Baptists deny the right of any to communicate who have not been baptized in their own way.

But why should we allude to variances between sects, when individual Meetings cannot live at peace. Is it not notorious, nay, admitted, that in these dissenting "churches," where the members agree upon all general points, and are united for a common object by mutual consent, and under an express religious obligation, quarrels notwithstanding arise, and are followed out with all the violence of party spirit, heedless of the scandal and ruin which they bring upon the cause? Until dissenters can agree among themselves, it were folly to hope that they will be at peace with us.

When the Church was actually overturned at the Great Rebellion, did her downfall secure unity and peace? Was it not the signal for renewed contention, and endless divisions; till Dissent was destroyed by the multiplication and corruption of sects, like a tree eaten up by the funguses spawned from its own rottenness?

The only expediency which is right and safe is that which determines how principles may be applied to circumstances, so as to secure their most favourable operation, and especially to maintain their integrity. Principles themselves are never to be compromised. We are persuaded that Dissent is wrong in principle, and we dare not sanction it: hurtful in its operation, and we dare not encourage it: dangerous in its tendency, and we ought to use every exertion to extend and strengthen whatever may counteract its influence.

We disclaim all hostility to dissenters, and are glad to unite with them wherever we can properly do so: nor is the sphere small within which this friendly union and intercourse are safe. Society with all its courtesies; private and public business; political, literary, and charitable institutions, offer a wide field within which we may forget all differences. But in whatever concerns religious instruction, whether it apply to public worship, or to the education of the young, we cannot unite with them without compromising principles we are bound to maintain, sacrificing powers it is our duty to employ, and betraying the cause we are required to defend.

For a Church being God's appointed means of imparting religious knowledge, education ought to be conducted in strict accordance with its principles and forms. A child must not be allowed to grow up without definite principles, until he shall have mastered the contents of the Bible, and attained to that maturity of judgment which may enable him to reason and decide upon them. He must be guided by his teachers, and taught, from the first dawnings of reason, the essentials of Christian truth, by a simple and comprehensive epitome, which shall make him acquainted with the faith and duty of a Christian, and furnish him with a key to the Bible. But this cannot be when different parties unite. All experience proves, that in such unions, religion itself must be

sacrificed for the sake of peace. Each objects to every peculiarity of another, and whatever any party may dislike must be thrown aside. This applies, not merely to questions of church discipline, but also to matters of faith and duty. Nay, where all parties agree on the importance of the *thing*, it is enough to differ respecting the *mode*. Every point, however vital, upon which any difference of opinion may in any way arise, must be sacrificed altogether.

Thus, when it was proposed to employ the Gospel of St. Luke as a class-book in the Government schools in Ireland, a difference arose on a single expression which Protestants and Papists translate differently; and therefore the passage of ten verses, which describes the incarnation of our Lord, is expunged from the Gospel. So prayer is never used in the British and Foreign Schools, because there is a difference of opinion respecting the mode of offering it. Thus also religion is excluded altogether from the London University, so called, and the proposal to form a class for instruction in the Evidences of Christianity was rejected, because it might offend the Jews. How can those unions of different sects be safe, nay, how can they be lawful, which cannot be obtained without laying aside religion?

All Christians should promote unity and peace, but not by compromising truth and duty. We are to contend earnestly for the faith; and if parties cause divisions, we are required, not to attempt conciliation, by submitting to unreasonable demands, but to mark, and avoid them.

Be it therefore our care, as children and disciples of the Church, thankfully to receive the blessings she offers, and fearlessly to commit ourselves in her cause; not as in a party struggle, but as performing a Christian duty. It will not be necessary to assume a hostile attitude, or to cherish an angry feeling. It is enough that we display in all our conduct a conscientious attachment to the Church, and a hearty zeal in her cause; being careful, by nothing that we do, and by nothing that we leave undone, to sanction, encourage, or strengthen the designs of those, who in ignorance, or in malice, by direct, or by indirect means, would defame her character, narrow her influence, or weaken her authority.

The Church appeals in support of her pretensions to the direct authority of the New Testament, and the analogy of the Old;—to the writings of the Fathers;—to the invariable practice of every Christian Church through the first fifteen centuries;—and to the recorded declarations of the earliest Presbyterian teachers, who pleaded only the necessity created by the circumstances in which they were placed to excuse them for deviating from Episcopacy.

Few, however, would possess the extent of information and leisure necessary for such an inquiry: but this is little to be regretted; for a simple, decisive, and intelligible proof may be found. The effectual test of a disputed principle is to carry it out to its consequences, and mark its effects. To this test, let the Episcopal and Congregational systems be submitted.

Man is endued with dispositions and qualities which, when hallowed by religion, advance him to moral dignity and excellence; but which, when they operate without this heavenly control, hurry him to inconsistency and evil. If, therefore, two religious systems are presented for examination, the one ordained by God, the other devised by man, we shall find in their practical effects the evidence of their respective origins. The one, given in mercy by Him who knows the heart, will adapt itself to all times and circumstances; in all things approving its power to promote whatever is excellent, and to check all that is evil: and though defects will and must arise in whatever is administered by man, they will in *this* be created only by the imperfections of the agent. The other, being of the earth, earthy, will in all things have a downward tendency; and whatever may appear in it that is excellent, will be accidental, and referable to external causes. If, therefore, it shall be found, that the tendency of the Church is to promote and exalt, and that of Dissent, to impair and destroy, all that we should prize in ourselves, in society, in the State, and in religion, we shall have no difficulty in referring each to its proper source, and as little in determining how we should receive or reject it.

THE CHURCH ESTABLISHED ON THE BIBLE;

OR, THE DOCTRINES AND DISCIPLINE OF THE CHURCH SHEWN, IN THE ORDER AND CONNEXION OF THE SERVICES SHE APPOINTS FROM THE SCRIPTURES.

ADVENT.

THE importance of the doctrines connected with our Lord's Nativity, evidently requires that we should not be called to commemorate it without due preparation; and the subject of his second coming peculiarly accords with the season. The appointment of Advent Sundays, therefore, as a preparation for Christmas, took place at a very early period. The Church of Rome even refers it to Apostolic appointment, ascribing it to St. Peter; on no better grounds, however, than tradition or conjecture. The earliest direct reference is a homily on the subject written about the year 450.

The subjects illustrated in the four Advent Sundays are, on the first, repentance, with particular reference to the coming of our Lord:—on the second, the Scriptures our safeguard amidst the snares of the world, and our hope against the day of Christ:—on the third, the triumph and blessedness which the Church will enjoy at his coming, and the office of his ministers to prepare his way:—on the fourth, Christ our hope and refuge.

The collects for the three first Sundays are modern; the first and second having been composed for the first book of King Edward VI, in 1549; the third, at the last revision of the Liturgy, in 1661-2. The other is very ancient.

FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

Repentance.

Morning Lesson .	Isaiah i.
Evening Lesson .	Isaiah ii.
Epistle . . .	Romans xiii. 8—14.
Gospel. . . .	St. Matthew xxi. 1—13.

The first step in the Christian course is repentance. This was the doctrine taught by John the Baptist, when he came, the forerunner of our Lord: with this, our Lord himself began his ministry:—"From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Our Church, in all her ministrations, observes the same order. The first condition she requires of persons to be baptized, is "repentance, whereby they forsake sin;" and the first promise and vow made by their sureties, is to renounce the world, the flesh, and the devil. Her morning and evening services commence with a call to repentance, followed by humble confession. Still deeper is the acknowledgment of guilt, and more fervent the cry for mercy, which she puts into the mouth of her disciples, before she admits them to receive the holy communion; and on this day, she begins the yearly course of instruction she has provided, with the doctrine which our Lord first of all taught, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

The services appointed for this day set forth the nature of repentance,—the motives to it,—and the means by which it is made effectual.

Repentance springs from that right sense of sin which makes us feel its evil and deadly nature, and regard it with abhorrence and fear. The true penitent will not seek to hide, or excuse his offences, as if they proceeded from natural infirmity, and were only a partial mixture of evil in his character, against which his virtues may be fairly set. He who would offer such a plea has yet to learn that he is a sinner. The morning lesson for this day gives a very different view of sin. It declares it, v. 2—6, to be a general corruption of the whole man, from which we must be cleansed and renewed, or we perish. It offers no excuse, as if our guilt were the less, because we have been "made children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven:" on the contrary, as the disobedience of a child is worse than the offence of a stranger, it declares the ingratitude of God's children to be something for heaven and earth to wonder at: "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O

earth, for the Lord hath spoken: I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider."

The lesson proceeds to destroy utterly the vain hope of such, as trust for salvation to the regularity or strictness of their attendance upon religious services. As long as we cherish sin, such services are only mockery, and God regards them with abomination, v. 10—15. Finally, it offers a test by which to know the real character of our repentance; namely, that, if genuine, it leads to a holy life. A man may bitterly lament his sin while he is suffering from its consequences; but such sorrow is very different from repentance. If he truly hate sin, he will also love and follow after holiness. "Wash you; make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well;" v. 16, 17. In the same manner, the epistle presents the general commandment, to love our neighbour, as comprehending all those commandments which forbid to injure him: and connects the exhortation to cast off the works of darkness; rioting, and drunkenness; chambering, and wantonness; strife, and envying; with that, to "put on the Lord Jesus Christ;" in other words, to display his character, by copying his example.

The morning lesson offers motives to repentance, in the gracious promises declared to the penitent, v. 18, 19; 24—27: and the judgments denounced against the wicked, v. 20; 28—31. These considerations apply with peculiar force to Christians; and especially at this season, when we prepare to commemorate the birth of our Saviour, and direct our thoughts forward to his second advent. "He came to visit us in great humility," that he might save us from our sins. Happy they who receive him; wo to them who neglect so great a salvation! for all who despise his mercy, will receive his judgment. He is indeed a merciful and long-suffering Saviour: but let it not be forgotten, that he is exalted, the Lord of all, to whose dominion all things shall bow; and will come, the Judge of all, from whose righteous sentence none can escape.

Thus he is set forth in the evening lesson; which foretells the establishment of his kingdom above all dominion and power; with the blessings that flow from his government; honour to his church; wisdom, holiness, and peace, for all who seek and obey him. But it displays also the destruction of all that opposes him; the pride of man abased at the glory of his majesty; the strength of man trembling at his power; the might and pomp of the earth cast down to shame and ruin; the idols utterly destroyed; man hiding himself in the dust; and the Lord alone exalted. It is our privilege to rejoice, that our hope rests on this Almighty Saviour; but we ought to rejoice with trembling, while we remember, that if we seek not mercy from his grace, we shall find destruction from his justice.

We, indeed, have no power to help ourselves. We can only feel our bondage, and look to God for deliverance. He calls us to repent, as if every thing depended on our own exertion; but, as we learn, v. 24—27, it is by Him, and in his strength, that our repentance is made effectual. He, whose property is ever to have mercy and to forgive, receives our humble petitions; and though we be tied and bound with the chain of our sins, yet the pitifulness of his great mercy will loose us, to the honour of our advocate and mediator, Jesus Christ. And as our Lord, when he entered publicly into Jerusalem, cast out from the temple all that defiled it, so, if we receive him, he will also purify our hearts, which are temples for the living God, that he may abide in us, and that we may offer holy and acceptable sacrifice.

The manner in which the Gospel describes our Lord to have entered Jerusalem has a very significant meaning, and offers an important lesson. God had strictly commanded, Deut. xvii. 16, that the kings of Israel should not multiply horses; that, not possessing horses and chariots, which were the chief strength of war, Israel might always look to Him as their protector, and not trust in their own forces. Their disregard of this command is often prominently noticed among their sins. It is thus expressed in the evening lesson, v. 7, where it is coupled with luxury, and idolatry; and the prophecy of Zechariah, referred to in the gospel for this day, pro-

ceeds to declare, v. 9, that God will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem. When, therefore, in fulfilment of this prophecy, Christ, the Son of David, entered Jerusalem as her King, riding upon an ass, it was not only to show his meekness and humility, but also to afford a lively emblem of trust in God, and of perfect obedience to his law.

In all these points he has left us an example, which, as the Epistle enjoins us, we ought to follow. There can be no real penitence without humility, trust, and obedience; for a sense of guilt will make us humble: a conviction that only God can save us, will make us cast ourselves entirely upon his help; and if we indeed desire to be holy, we shall seek to observe all his laws.

In this spirit let us examine ourselves, and draw near to Him. Let the beginning of another year rouse to serious reflection. "It is high time to awake out of sleep." "The night is far spent," in which we have slumbered on, too much forgetting God's mercy, and judgment. "The day is at hand," when, if we watch not now, we shall wake to everlasting misery. *Now*, therefore, let us seek "grace, that we may cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armour of light;" assured that our prayers will be heard through Him, who for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven, to visit us in great humility. So, "in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty, to judge both the quick and the dead, we shall be found an acceptable people in his sight." *When* he will so come we know not, nor does it concern us; for this we know, that our mortal life will soon end, and the day of death will be to every one the day of judgment.

SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

The Scriptures our safeguard amidst the snares of the world, and our hope against the day of Christ.

Morning Lesson Isaiah v.
Evening Lesson . Isaiah xxiv.
Epistle . . . Romans xv. 4—13.
Gospel . . . . St. Luke xxi. 25—33.

The general disposition of mankind is to indulge every inclination; to excuse themselves in all their conduct; and to condemn for unreasonable strictness all who refuse to think and act with them. The effect of this, is to establish a rule of judgment and action upon worldly principles; which condemns, indeed, such flagrant offences as cannot be endured in society, but gives full scope and sanction to all the devices of a corrupt heart.

Hence, the Scriptures denounce a worldly spirit with such emphatic condemnation, even to declaring that whoever will be the friend of the world is the enemy of God. Not that worldly things in themselves are unlawful. The world has many claims upon us which it were sinful to neglect. It offers many pleasures which nothing forbids to enjoy. We may possess wealth, and honour; the delights of social intercourse, and the privileges of distinction and power, not only without offence, but with eminent usefulness. But we must be careful, lest we pursue these objects as the chief end of our being; and give to the world our heart, which God claims for Himself.

To respect the opinion of others, yet not be enslaved by it; to form a just standard of duty, and steadily live up to it; to be exposed to the seductions of pleasure, yet not be led astray; to withstand the influence of example and opinion, and bear the reproach of being singular, even when our own inclinations would prompt us to comply; to control our tastes and wishes, and bring every thought into subjection to the law of God; in a word, to deny ourselves, and take up our cross, is required of all who would lead a holy life. These are points where the Christian must always stand upon his guard. His danger is seldom found in gross offences, from which a common sense of honesty and decency may preserve him; but in small indulgences, and weak compliances, where conscience rather doubts, than condemns. These gradually draw him nearer and nearer to the world, till the line of separation is lost. Many a Christian has glided down this slope to perdition. Many a church, which rose in persecution, and triumphed over the rage of the world, has sunk, and yielded to its seductions. The vineyard, favoured with every advantage,

planted with the choicest vine, fenced and cultivated with care, and refreshed with the dews of heaven, has brought forth wild grapes, the natural fruits of an evil heart, instead of those which the care of the husbandman entitled him to look for. Judgment has followed. The fences destroyed, and the blessing of Heaven withheld, it has been left a waste; to be overrun with noxious weeds, and to be trodden down by the wild beasts of the forest.

The morning lesson for this day is of the most startling character. It demands the closest attention, and calls to the strictest self-examination. The sins against which it denounces such awful woes are generally little thought of. They refer to conduct which the world always excuses, and commonly applauds;—such, for the most part, as professors of religion may indulge in, yet not be deemed inconsistent. That man is always admired who swells his fortune; and if the means have been somewhat questionable, they are spoken of in terms of censure so mild that they almost convey praise. He who devotes the day to wine, and music, and festive revelry, is commended for the spirit and taste which preside over his splendid hospitality. Vanity is at most a venial failing; nay, is it not the grace and ornament of society? Who thinks, while observing the admired of the circle, invested with all that is elegant, and adorned with art, taste, and fashion, that a being, whom God created for eternity, must not trifle away life like the insect of a summer! Who considers how the mind becomes enfeebled in a round of pleasures; how love of admiration leads to rivalry; and this again fills the heart with envy, jealousy, and variance; while the serious duties of time are neglected, and thoughts of eternity are dismissed as unwelcome intruders! Whoso rightly considers this, may understand how truly vanity is said to draw after it "iniquity as with a cord, and sin as it were with a cart-rope." Or he, to whom a long course of convivial enjoyment has given strength to bear the pleasures of the table; who is "mighty to drink wine," envied for it by his companions, and, since he never shows the effect of excess, not condemned by others; the world being judge, who censures him! They again, who vail the emptiness of folly, and the deformities of vice, with specious words, and songs and music; giving the name of friendship, and love, and honour, to that which is truly riot, and profligacy, and fraud, and murder; who speak contemptuously of the truth that will not deceive, and of the virtue that dares not sin; thus calling evil, good; and good, evil; putting darkness for light, and light for darkness; the world is a friend even to them. Finally, are not they respected, who, in all their plans, trust to their own wisdom and foresight; while he, who qualifies his resolve with a dependence upon God's providence, is deemed a weak enthusiast?

Alas, for their delusion! What shall they do in the day of their calamity, when they can no more take delight in their pleasant things,—when death approaches, and judgment is at hand,—when they shall have no more comfort on earth, and no hope remains for them in heaven; "for the land is full of darkness and sorrow, and the light is dark in the heavens thereof!"

Under all these forms, a worldly spirit has one common feature; forgetfulness of God, and contemptuous disregard of his word. "They regard not the work of the Lord, neither consider the operation of his hands:" and they are judged, because, in devoting themselves to the pursuits and pleasures of the world, "they have cast away the law of the Lord of hosts, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel."

This, the word of God, is given to be our guide and safeguard amidst the snares of the world. In the Scriptures we have a standard of truth and purity, by which we may know the real character of our principles, and determine the just value of our pursuits. If we search them diligently, in a teachable and humble spirit, and with fervent prayer that the Holy Ghost will enlighten us to know God's will, and strengthen us to do it, we shall be taught to form a right estimate of the end of our being, and enabled to set our affections upon things above. This will be our security; for the heart filled with the hope of treasures in heaven will have no room for the inordinate desire of meaner objects; and if we enjoy the peace of God, we shall turn with contempt from the allurement of vain pleasures.

While the Scriptures raise us above the world by the exalted hopes they impart, they arm us against temptations, by showing the end of all that would delude us. While the multitudes are thoughtlessly sporting in the sunbeams, we see the storm gathering from the horizon, which will soon sweep them to ruin. The morning lesson declares woes we may well tremble at. In the evening lesson, judgment is pronounced against the earth itself; and the picture of desolation is terrible. Again, in the gospel for the day, our Lord describes similar, and not less awful signs and judgments, as the forerunners of his coming in a cloud with power and great glory: and in the chapter from which the gospel is taken, he proceeds to warn his disciples, in accordance with the lessons, "Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares." That the primary application of these woes was to Jerusalem, only gives the prophecy a more fearful character. The fate of Jerusalem was the type of a general judgment; and if the punishment of one guilty city was so dreadful, what shall be the doom of a guilty world?

Yet, with all these calamities impending over the earth, God's people are taught by the Scriptures to rejoice in hope. When the powers of the earth are cast down, Christ shall be exalted, Lord over all. When the glories of the world fade and perish, the Gospel shall be established in perfect excellence and beauty. In the services for this day, amidst the desolations foretold, the saints rejoice in the triumph of their faith and patience. While the earth, struck by God's hand, is reeling to destruction, songs are heard from the uttermost parts, even glory to the righteous. "The moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of Hosts shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients, gloriously." And when the sorrows our Lord predicted shall begin to come to pass, he bids his disciples "to lift up their heads, and look up, for their redemption draweth nigh."

These prophecies are general, and the time of their fulfilment may yet be distant, but they admit of being applied by every one with strict propriety. If we yield to what we renounced at our baptism, "the pomps and vanities of this wicked world," it needs not for our punishment that our lot be cast in the day of God's vengeance. With age and sickness all our pleasures will fade away; and death is as terrible to the sinner who dies in his prosperity, as if he perished in the wreck of the world.

To secure for ourselves the consolation and strength imparted by the Scriptures, we must value them as we ought, and use them aright. We must receive them as the precious gift of God, who has caused them to be written for our learning. We must "hear them" in his house; "read" them at home; "mark" them with careful attention, that we may understand what we read; "learn" from them, that our memory being stored with divine truth, we may be armed against all temptation with "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God;" and "inwardly digest" them with meditation and prayer, to derive nourishment and strength, as from our daily food. So, with God's blessing, we shall possess our souls in patience amidst the trials of the world, and enjoy comfort in all afflictions; we shall "embrace, and ever hold fast, the blessed hope of everlasting life, which God hath given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ;" the assurance, that "when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory."

But in avoiding a worldly spirit, we must be careful not to shrink from our duties. We are taught in the epistle that the Scriptures are given for our learning, with the blessing of God, and the power of the Holy Ghost, to comfort and establish us in using them, not that we may fly from the world, but that, living in the world, we may be strengthened to serve God faithfully. The Christian must not live to himself. As a member of Christ's body, the Church, he is required to contribute to the well-being of his fellow-members, and especially, as the context of the epistle, and the whole of the former chapter explains, to consider his weaker brethren, and deny himself for their advantage. Set to be a light in the world, he must let his light "so shine before men, that they, seeing his good works, may glorify his Father, which is in heaven."

Both these duties are enforced in the epistle by the example of our Lord Jesus Christ; whose goodness towards ourselves obliges us to receive our brethren with the same solicitude for their safety and welfare; and the comprehensiveness of whose charity, which not only fulfils the promises made to the fathers, but extends also the mercy of God to us Gentiles, requires from us a benevolence as universal. If the snares of the world are so dangerous, and its allurements so hard to be withstood, we are the more called to encourage and assist others, by our example, to keep the right way. Not making a showy profession, for the pretence of superior goodness almost always springs from pride or hypocrisy, we should be careful in every thing to act consistently, and to recommend our principles by our conduct. We should avoid all amusements whose tendency is to sinful excess; abstain even from things lawful, when they would offend weak consciences; act as a Christian in all things, quietly, openly, and fearlessly; not shunning to converse on religious subjects at proper times; and especially being careful to attend with punctuality, order, and reverence, to all the duties of family and public worship. Thus we shall encourage and confirm others, who want resolution to walk steadfastly in a holy course, if not supported in it; and to whom our unfaithfulness and cowardice would be a snare. To gain, as far as possible, the esteem and admiration of worldly characters, we must always be careful to present our religion to them in a manner to compel their respect: that so, when they feel, as they must often feel, the vanity of their own pursuits, they may desire to share with us the blessings of a religion, whose spirit is displayed in our affectionate solicitude for their welfare; whose holiness is acknowledged in the consistent purity of our lives; and whose happiness is proved by the comfort we are seen to enjoy.

PSALMS AND HYMNS

WRITTEN TO ILLUSTRATE THE SERVICES OF THE CHURCH.

I.

ADVENT HYMN.

His kingdom comes! ye saints, rejoice!
Let earth and heav'n unite their voice
To swell the lofty strain.
Proclaim the joyful news abroad—
The mighty King! the glorious God!
He comes on earth to reign.

High o'er the pomp of worldly state,
On chosen Sion's lofty seat,
Jehovah sets his throne.
Now shall the lands confess his pow'r;
And all the earth his Name adore,
And serve the Lord alone.

Before the terrors of his face
Let mortal man his pride abase,
And ev'ry idol fall:
Prostrate be every haughty foe;
The pomp and pow'r of earth lie low,
And God be all in all!

II.

GOD COMING TO JUDGMENT.

Jehovah hath spoken! the nations shall hear!
From the east to the west shall his glory appear;
With thunders and tempest to judgment He'll come;
And all men before Him shall wait for their doom.

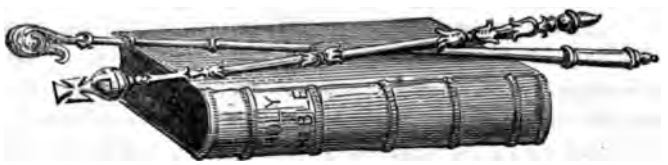
Thou, formal professor; thou, saint but in name;
Where now wilt thou cover thy guilt and thy shame?
When thy sin, long conceal'd, shall be blazon'd abroad,
And thy conscience shall echo the sentence of God!

Wo,—wo to the sinners! to what shall they trust
In the day of God's vengeance, the Holy and Just?
How meet the fierce terrors that flame in his path,
When the mountains shall melt at the glance of his wrath!

O God! ere the day of thy mercy be past,
With trembling, our souls on that mercy we cast:
O guide us in wisdom; thine aid we implore,
Till, sav'd with thy people, thy grace we adore.

Psalm L.

CHURCH AND KING.



"FEAR GOD—HONOUR THE KING."

No. II. DECEMBER 1, 1836.

THE CHURCH AND DISSENT,

CONSIDERED IN THEIR PRACTICAL INFLUENCE.

CHAPTER II.

The Church and Dissent, considered in their Accordance with the Christian System.

THERE are leading principles in the Christian system which afford sure tests for whatever professes to accord with it. It is comprehensive, for it is designed for all :—it is a system of order, unity, and peace :—it invests its ministers with official authority and dignity :—and it affirms the ignorance and corruption of man, for which it provides the effectual remedy. Let us consider whether these principles apply to the Church, or to Dissent.

It will at once be admitted that the Church is comprehensive; for she is reproached by her enemies with including all characters. So was it said of our Lord, "this man receiveth sinners;" and the Church that faithfully represents him, being commissioned to preach the Gospel to every creature, must not confine her attention to a select party. She must receive all as committed to her charge; and seek, and strive to reclaim, every wanderer from the fold. The members of the Church of England are all who have been made members of Christ in baptism, who, from the time when they personally ratify their vows in confirmation, are admitted, as of right, to every Christian privilege. This universal principle is applied in her parochial system, which gives to every man his own place of worship, and his own appointed minister. The inadequacy of her means to keep pace with the increase of population, however the consequences are to be lamented, does not affect the principle which governs her ministrations.

Nor let that be forgotten which is indispensable to a comprehensive religious system, that the Church gives full latitude of opinion in non-essentials. Having defined every vital point of doctrine and discipline beyond the power of evasion, she leaves entirely open all those matters of curious speculation upon which men chiefly differ. Thus she is enabled to secure unity of faith, and yet allow, even to her ministers, the utmost safe amount of mental freedom; and hence, while sects are divided by shades which a casuist could hardly distinguish, her tranquillity is scarcely affected by the most important controversies in metaphysical theology.

But Independency is a system of exclusion. The Meeting, with its own peculiar interests, stands isolated in the midst of society, which sees, and understands, as little of its nature, as if it belonged to another age and country. Within the Meeting itself a still narrower wall excludes the congregation from the "church." It takes no cognizance of any thing beyond itself. To borrow the words of a very intelligent dissenter, whose opinions the well known Mr. Binney has appended with deserved praise to one of his publications,—"the bulk of society, good and bad, stand without the pale of congregationalism. If not excluded, they

elude the operation of the system, which takes no cognizance of those whom it does not, with their own consent, embrace. Christianity reached all by its authority, embraced all by its provisions: its character is universality. Do our institutions approximate to this character of authoritative claim, and universality? is not their fundamental principle—separation from the world—a principle of repulsion, rather than of attraction; and is not its operation, when adopted as the exclusive principle, adverse to the extension of Christianity?" (Two letters by Fiat Justitia, p. 114). Mr. Binney himself declares in the same work, p. 54., that "Dissent, unaccommodating and exclusive, ignorant or regardless of human nature, pursuing its principle of theoretical perfection, and attaching too much importance to microscopic formalities, repels many whom it should study to attract."

In complex systems, order depends upon assigning every duty to its proper agent, confining every agent to his appointed duty, and uniting the whole for mutual support in a system of regular subordination. The apostle expressly applies this principle to the Christian Church, which he compares to the human body, whose members perform each its own office, all being subordinate to one head.

Thus, in the Church of England, every officer, whether spiritual, or secular, has his own sphere of duty, with certain rules to guide him, and a superior to whom he is accountable. She thus fixes that personal, and definite responsibility, and gives that security against irregular interference, which are essential to efficiency and peace. Rivalry can hardly exist between persons who never clash, and party spirit must sink, when the permanent authority and independence of an officer make it hopeless to attack him.

But there are no subordinate members in Dissent. All are heads, except the minister, the slave of a hundred masters. It is the first principle of Dissent, that every individual, having the Bible in his hand, owes allegiance in whatever concerns religion only to God, and recognizes no delegated authority; the full, unfettered exercise of private judgment being his absolute right, with the Bible for his only guide, and conscience for his only judge. *It* is evident that this involves the extreme democratic principle of absolute personal independence, which repudiates the idea of any authority or government not derived from the appointment or consent of the parties to be governed. It is entirely opposed to the first principle, as well of the Church as of Monarchy, which represents God as the only ruler, from whom all authority is derived, and who requires every one to be subject, "for conscience sake," to all the powers, both civil and ecclesiastical, which He has ordained. It will be instructive to try this principle as we find it illustrated in the practical working of Dissent.

And first it may be observed that the independent principle creates a spirit of hostile rivalry between neighbouring Meetings. The peculiarities which distinguish different denominations are so unimportant in themselves, for the smallest difference will estrange where none can be required to submit, that they are easily outweighed by a preference for another minister; or, indeed, by any motive for a change which taste or resentment may suggest. The fluctuations to which every Meeting is exposed, at one time prosperous, at another, unsettled and declining, lead many persons to change their place of worship; and it is not in human nature to avoid angry feelings in the adherents of the declining cause, or something like triumph in the successful rival. Afterwards, when the differences which caused the secession shall have been adjusted, there is a natural anxiety to bring back former friends, whom their new associates are as anxious to keep. Something of this is sure to happen in the course of years; and cordiality can seldom be restored where rivalry has thus been felt.

Far more baneful are those internal dissensions which Dissent cannot avoid. For, let it be considered who compose the "church meetings," at which all business is decided by vote. There are persons, ciphers every where else, who, jealous of the only consequence they possess, revel in the exercise of a local and temporary power. Others, without education, and of narrow views, who have raised themselves in the world by attention to business, regard their success as a conclusive proof of sound judgment; and thinking themselves competent to decide upon every question, obstinately maintain the most absurd opinions. Others, with variances rankling in their bosoms, are

ready for any opportunity to quarrel. There are the comparatively rich, over-rating the importance to which their property and station entitle them; and the poor, ready to assert their equality. All these, with equal voices, are brought together in a deliberative assembly, in which there is no controlling power. The merest trifle may rise to a party question; for when they begin to quarrel, the chairman having no authority, who can foretell the end? Discussions, too irregular to be called debates, in which passion more than reason is concerned, are carried on, and adjourned from meeting to meeting, too often, with no other result than embittering the quarrel. All this time, they are assembling for public worship in the house which is the arena for their strife; while their fellow-worshippers are partizans or opponents; and their minister perhaps is the object of contention.

Even a vote will not settle a party question, because there is no executive power to give effect to it; but the minority, their dissatisfaction aggravated by defeat, pursue their object by intrigue and agitation. To cut them off would deprive the cause of their support, which cannot be spared; and knowing this, the smallest, and most unreasonable faction possesses importance, and presumes upon it. I have twice known a minister sacrificed to propitiate a party, who, in one instance, had seceded, and in the other, had been expelled.

A Meeting may contain two leaders, neither willing to be second to the other. Every thing is then liable to be contested; and all questions, from the conduct of an offending member, to the appointment or removal of the minister, will be considered with reference, less to their general merits, than to their party bearing.

Sometimes the beaten party secede, and form another Meeting. Then is seen the scandalous spectacle of two nominally Christian societies of the same denomination opposing one another with all the arts of rivalry and animosity. Yet, shameful as such things are, and though they present the worst features of schism in their origin, character, and consequences, they admit of full justification upon dissenting principles. The parties strove to effect an object which they deemed necessary; rightly or not, no matter, their conscience is judge. They failed, and as they could no longer worship with comfort and profit in their accustomed place, they withdrew from it; which they had as much right to do, as to separate from their parish church. Leaving it, they were bound to find another place of worship, and to strive for its prosperity. Upon dissenting principles, they ought to do all this, and no man has a right to question them. But the strife, the divisions, the biting and devouring one another, the private quarrels, the public scandal, and all the evil feelings created and sustained by the dispute, sufficiently expose the sophistry. Where the waters are so bitter, the fountain cannot be pure. Yet dissenters reproach churchmen for refusing to wave principles to unite with them, while they themselves quarrel, and separate, for the merest trifles.

THE credit and dignity enjoyed by the clergy need not be insisted on, for it is a theme of complaint with their enemies. Yet this influence does not arise from secular causes; for if so, whence the deference which a clergyman receives continually from persons, his equals in education, and far above him in rank, wealth, and connexions. Nor would dissenters allow that it depends upon superior character and usefulness, and more effective ministrations; for why then is it not shared by their own ministers? The truth is, that the dignity which invests a clergyman, and of which nothing but his own unworthiness can deprive him, though influenced by the general causes of personal respectability, is derived from his sacred office alone; just as we associate with a judge the idea of an awful majesty, which never could attach to the most distinguished individual at the bar. This accords strictly with the scriptural view of the subject; for nothing can be more lowly than the Apostle's estimate of himself; nothing more exalted than the dignity he asserts for his office.

Far different is the position of a dissenting minister. In direct opposition to the scriptural character of the ministry, his office sinks him to a dependant, and his credit and influence must be derived from personal considerations. His strength is found in the popularity he commands by his talents; i-

power he may derive from property or connexions; in the support of a respectable circle of friends; or in the dexterous management of his flock. Happy, could the faithful discharge of duty bring him peace and safety; but when assailed by calumny, which integrity itself may provoke, he is seldom allowed time to live it down. With him, to be accused is to be condemned. However contemptible the charge, probably a slander whispered through a round of tattlers at the tea-table; or a mere invention to cover some fancied offence so paltry that the accuser is ashamed to make it known, he will generally find it necessary to resign. The Meeting can easily replace him, but it cannot afford to lose the malcontents. He must be careful lest his faithfulness offend those who have power to dismiss him. He must distribute his attentions skilfully, for fancied neglects, especially if contrasted with attentions to others, will be long remembered, and resented. Should his character, conduct, and prudence be above all question, still he must not deem himself secure. Though allowed no power, he is made responsible for every thing; and whenever a sacrifice is required, he is sure to be selected for the victim. Has party spirit crept among the friends? Another minister may unite them. Is the cause unprosperous? Another may revive it. Are the finances low? A young man is to be had for a smaller salary, and the former minister, with his family, is cast upon the world. The growing affection, which at last makes a parish look up to their old clergyman as a common father, is little known in Dissent. Years multiply recollections of offence; or create a thirst for novelty; or find a faction to be conciliated; and the minister is turned off when he is perhaps unfit for any other place. I know a minister with a very large family, who not long ago was dismissed, with not the shadow of a fault imputed, from a Meeting which he had served for twenty years; and who, having failed to get another situation, has been obliged to return to his original trade of a shoemaker.

These things are little known to the world. The Meetings in large towns, which chiefly fix public attention, are generally able, as the prizes of Dissent, to select ministers of established popularity: and their congregations are too scattered, too busy, and commonly too respectable for low cabals. But in Meetings elsewhere, for the most part, the unfortunate ministers, while compelled to preserve the appearance of gentility, are subjected to poverty, dependence, uncertainty, and indignity. Like menial servants, first taken upon trial, and then hired, they are liable at all times, for any thing or for nothing, at the will, or caprice, of their masters and mistresses, to be turned away. I could from personal knowledge relate tales of their misery which would almost make the heart bleed.

There are exceptions to this melancholy picture, but they form not a large proportion. Here and there, a congregation will be found of quiet, respectable families, who have no taste for novelty, and are content to worship with their minister, instead of judging him. With such a congregation, he may live almost like a clergyman with his parishioners; and it is truly a haven of rest to him, when the romantic hopes of his early career have been dispelled, and he can appreciate the hollow popularity which makes him the idol of to-day, to be the victim of to-morrow. A minister may also enjoy permanent influence, where the congregation has been brought together by his own exertions; that is, provided his flock have not been formed in any degree by ramblers from other folds; for these will bring their schismatic spirit, and well for his peace if he get rid of them quietly. Wo to the Meeting, however, when a long and friendly connexion is dissolved. The new minister will be tried by the standard of his predecessor; a most unfair criterion, because it brings novelty into collision with confirmed taste; and a stranger as a rival to an old friend. Many will be dissatisfied, and not slow to express their feelings. The spirit of discord, once raised, is not soon laid; and then comes a succession of disputes and changes, till nothing worth contending for is left, and the alternative is peace or ruin.

The fallen and corrupt state of man, a truth which is the foundation of all religion, is fatal to the principle of voluntary churches. The object of a christian church is to maintain, and present continually to the people, "whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear," a standard of truth and purity immea-

surably above their own. But here we have the blind, corrupt, and self-deceiving multitude choosing their own ways, appointing their own guides, fixing their own standard, and requiring that the devices and desires of their own hearts shall in all things be followed; claiming, in fact, to govern their rulers, direct their guides, and instruct their teachers. It will be said, they take the Bible for their guide! So, professedly, did all the heretics, who, in every age of Christianity, have wrested the Scriptures to their own destruction. So did the two hundred dissenting congregations, who in our own Country have lapsed to Socinianism. So do the Socinians of our own day. A proud and evil heart will not see the truth, but perverts the very book of God to sanction its own ways. But wise and holy men would see the truth, and keep it! How are they to enforce it upon congregations, their employers and masters; or, admitting that they derive influence from their personal character, which, after all, is exalting the power of man instead of the power of God, that influence extends only to their own congregations, and ends with their life. Are not the pulpits of some of the brightest names in Dissent now filled by Socinians? Let it be remembered, also, that the powerful talent which marks a man for a leader, is almost always associated with some weakness, not to say error; and the errors of great men are the part of their example most easy and likely to be followed. Some of the most dangerous heresies have originated in the most shining characters. A metaphysical speculation grafted upon a doctrine; a truth exaggerated beyond its due importance, received, perhaps, in an absolute, instead of a qualified sense, followed out to its consequences, and acted upon by the corruption of the human heart, may destroy religion itself. The leader of a sect must have some prominent or peculiar doctrine as the badge of his party; and novelty is always dangerous in religion.

An authoritative Church alone can afford security for the truth; nor is this putting the Church in God's stead, because to that end He has appointed it. It is like a straight and level road, fenced on either side with a creed, and a liturgy, along which the feeble may travel with comfort, and the ignorant with safety; while the system of voluntary sects is like an open, boundless common, full of bogs and pitfalls, and crossed with a thousand paths.

When a Church records its faith in a short, simple, and comprehensive creed, embodies that creed in a living form of prayer, and appeals to the Bible as its sole authority in all things, it deprives itself of the power to cloak an error. It stands forth in the light, that all its deeds may be approved. If it be wrong, if it teach for doctrine the commandments of men, it cannot evade its responsibility; for here is the recorded tenet from which it cannot shrink, and there the standard by which it must be tried. Sure to be assailed with a force and ingenuity which nothing but truth can resist, if it endure the assaults of talent and learning through ages, yet stand in its purity and strength, admired by the wisest, and loved by the best of men, we may be sure that God is with it.

A true Church may become corrupt; for if wickedness should overspread the land, men will not always endure the truth which condemns them. But in the progress of national corruption, the creeds and forms of purer times will long be a check to the wickedness of the present; while voluntary sects would immediately represent the opinions, and flatter the vices of the day. And if, yielding at last to sin, she turn aside from her purity, she can no more, with the fearlessness of innocence, display herself in the light of heaven. So the fallen Church of Rome shrinks from the Bible, whose light would display her shame, and appeals for her vindication to the stake.

A Church, by its open, fixed character, will preserve the faith for a season in the worst of times. Voluntary sects afford the means of corrupting it even in the best. They give full scope to every vain pretender, who misleads the ignorant and unwary with plausible sophistry. They enable infidels, who dare not brave public scandal by avowing their unbelief, to substitute a scheme of their own for revelation, and to call it religion. They afford an easy descent by which congregations, when they decline in spirituality, may glide imperceptibly from orthodoxy down to the very depths of heresy. The extempore prayers and sermon may be accommodated to any opinions; and it is easy to select such hym-

portions of Scripture as shall not disturb nor offend with unwelcome truths. Or, if they sink too deep in heresy to take the Bible with them at all, they have only to provide "an improved version."

The wisdom and goodness of Him who knows what is in man have adapted this divine institution to the wants and weakness of human nature; and God's preserving care, and continual presence, are his Church's security. On these she is encouraged to rely; for the commission which confers her authority, "Go, and teach all nations," is coupled with the promise, "Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world." That arm which supports, and that love which blesses, the most humble Christian through all his course, are pledged for the welfare of the Church. By the agency of his servants whom he raises up; by the influence of events which He controls; by his own presence in the midst of her; He forms, and perfects her for himself, that she may shew forth his praise. The history of our own Church wonderfully illustrates this. It presents a succession of trials through which God alone could have sustained her; while it exalts her with honour as his chosen instrument for delivering the nation from the most fearful dangers; and for imparting to it the most inestimable blessings.

THE CHURCH ESTABLISHED ON THE BIBLE.

THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

The office, honour, and responsibility of God's Ministers.

Morning Lesson. Isaiah xxv.
Evening Lesson. Isaiah xxvi.
Epistle . . . 1 Corinth. iv. 1—5.
Gospel . . . St. Matthew xi. 2—10.

The proofs given by our Lord during his ministry that he was the Messiah foretold by the prophets, might well satisfy the candid mind. The power and mercy displayed in his miracles; the wisdom and spirituality of his doctrines; and his condescension in imparting the blessings of his kingdom to the poor and despised, afforded evidence of the most convincing nature. As such, he offered the mere facts, Matt. xi. 5, to those whom John sent to inquire, "Art thou he that should come, or look we for another?" a question which John proposed, not to satisfy any doubts of his own, for he had already borne the strongest testimony to the person and office of Christ, but that his disciples might learn to know and follow him, whom hitherto they had perhaps regarded with prejudice as their Master's rival.

John, indeed, had always avowed, with the utmost humility, that he was only the messenger and forerunner of the Lord: yet of him, our Lord declared, that among all who were born of woman, none was greater than he; for that, in respect to the dignity of his office, he was even more than a prophet. The prophets had foretold the coming of Christ; but John, himself the subject of prophecy, was sent to prepare his way.

But the actual ministry of our Lord was only the dawning of the Gospel. The putting away of sin by the sacrifice of himself, the victory over death by his resurrection; the gift of the Holy Ghost; and the extension of salvation equally to all nations and families of the earth, were truths yet to be understood. The triumph of his kingdom, as declared in the lessons for this day, when God will exalt the Church, and fill the earth with the fulness of spiritual blessings, still waits for its accomplishment. Nor will the last and best hope of the Church be fulfilled, until the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and the last enemy shall be destroyed; when, this corruptible having put on incorruption, and this mortal, immortality, the saying shall be brought to pass that is written in the morning lesson, "Death is swallowed up in victory;" and that other, in the evening lesson, "Thy dead men shall live; together with my dead body shall they arise: awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust, for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast forth her dead!" Then shall redemption be complete in the triumph of the redeemed; who shall have their "perfect consummation and bliss, both in body

and soul, in God's eternal and everlasting glory."

To prepare the world for this blessed consummation is now the office of the ministers and "stewards of God's mysteries." Like John, they are sent "to turn the hearts of the disobedient unto the wisdom of the just," and to lead their followers to Christ. Like him, the minister of Christ must not be "a reed shaken with the wind," but very courageous to reprove sin, and faithful even unto death: not dissolved in pomp and luxury, but filled with an awful sense of the dignity of his mission. The meanest of them all, "he that is least in the kingdom of heaven," is honoured in his office above John the Baptist, himself distinguished more than every prophet who had gone before him. He was sent to prepare the way for a despised and suffering Messiah; but the minister of the Gospel, for the coming of a triumphant Saviour, the Lord and Judge of all.

As the character of John the Baptist may guide them in their conduct, the ministry of our Lord may teach them what is their duty. They are sent to open the eyes of the blind; to establish the goings of the lame; to cleanse from the leprosy of sin; to unstop the deaf ears; to quicken the spiritually dead; to preach the Gospel to the poor. These are, indeed, a task infinitely beyond their powers; but their dependence is on the help and blessing of Christ; whose word, delivered through his ministers, is not less effectual than when spoken with his own lips.

"It is required of stewards that a man be found faithful;" and they who are appointed to such an office are deeply responsible: but to whom,—to man? Surely not! Man's judgment is a very small thing to him who will be judged by the Lord for the most awful charge upon earth. He must deliver his message faithfully, as accountable to God who sends him; not being controlled by those to whom he is sent. If they refuse to hear, it is at their peril. If he soften the truth to please them, he is guilty of their blood. It is for him to speak the word upon which their salvation depends. It is theirs humbly to receive it, as the message of the Lord himself; and so to improve it, that at his second coming to judge the world, they may "be found an acceptable people in his sight."

FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

Christ our only Refuge.

Morning Lesson . .	Isaiah, xxx.
Evening Lesson . .	Isaiah, xxxii.
Epistle	Philippians, iv. 4—7.
Gospel	St. John, i. 19—28.

"Thus saith the Lord; cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord . . . . Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is." Jer. xvii. 5—7.

The morning lesson severely condemns the Jews, for that in the time of their danger they sought deliverance from Egypt, instead of resting with quietness and confidence upon God. Their hope in an arm of flesh is declared vanity, and the reward, shame and confusion. And forasmuch as they refused to hear the word of God, and required their teachers to flatter them in their vain hopes, therefore sudden punishment is denounced, judgment to overtake them in their own courses, fear, scattering, and desolation. But it points to a day of grace, when God will cause the adversity of his people to cease, and take away their affliction: when they shall hear the truth from faithful teachers, and the word shall keep them in the right way: when they shall cast away their idols, offer holy worship, and enjoy all the blessings of the Gospel. As for their enemies, God will chase them with his terrors, and crush them with his vengeance, as when He destroyed the Assyrian before Jerusalem.

The evening lesson foretels the reign of Christ, and the establishment of his dominion in truth and righteousness. It presents him, a helper of the weak, and a sure refuge in all adversity. The church shall indeed be tried with long affliction; but in the appointed day of blessing the Spirit shall be poured from on high, and her waste places filled with fruitfulness. In that day, judgment shall come down upon the oppressor, and the enemy shall be laid low; but righteousness and peace, quietness and assurance, shall be the portion of God's people for ever.

The duty thus explained in the lessons, hope and confidence in God, is applied in the

epistle. To " rejoice in the Lord always," is there urged upon a church which even then was suffering persecution. That " the Lord is at hand," is offered as a motive to moderation; for why covet superfluities so soon to be left behind? All anxious carefulness is condemned. Trusting always in God, our Father, who watches over us with his providence, it is our privilege " in everything, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, to make known our requests" to Him; which, if we do, " the peace of God that passeth all understanding, will keep," as a sure defence, " our hearts" from vain anxieties, and our " minds" from idle imaginations, " in Christ Jesus."

There is a false dependence alluded to in the Gospel against which every Christian ought to guard; that of too much resting on ministers, instead of receiving them only as God's messengers. This is neither an uncommon, nor a small fault. It has prevailed in every age. The Corinthians are severely rebuked for it, 1 Cor. i. 10—13; and the censure belongs to all who refuse to hear their appointed minister, unless he flatter their own opinions, and approve himself to their taste. This is the spirit which regards the prayers, and the reading of the Bible, in comparison as nothing, and gives all importance to the sermon. In its least degree, it puts the minister in God's stead, as if the people were to be taught by his eloquence instead of by the Bible. Its practical consequences are, first, a disposition to ramble from church to church, or to fix upon a minister from motives of mere taste, thus making self-gratification, rather than worship, the object of attendance. The next step is open schism. The end of it is deadly error; when the people will hear nothing that offends them; but, like the Jews condemned in the morning lesson, v. 10, " say to the seers, see not, and to the prophets, prophesy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits."

Against this evil the conduct of John the Baptist affords a useful lesson. He disclaimed all honour beyond that of being the voice to call the people to the Lord, and directed them to him as the only Saviour.

In the same spirit, ministers, if they would be really useful, must direct their people to Christ, upon whose blessing all their usefulness depends; and the people, if they would indeed profit from their ministers, must receive them for his sake, who hath sent them to prepare his way. Christ must be their only trust in all things. For it is by the word of God, not by the eloquence of man, that we are made wise unto salvation; and most vain and presumptuous is he, who would place a sermon, however eloquent, above the scriptures: it is by the power and great might of God, that we are succoured in our trials: and when, " through our sin and wickedness we are sore let, and hindered, in running the race that is set before us," it is only from his bountiful grace and mercy that we obtain help and deliverance.

CHRISTMAS DAY.

God manifested in the Flesh.

Morning Lessons .	Isaiah ix. 1—7.
	Luke ii. 1—14
Evening Lessons .	Isaiah vii. 10—16.
	Titus iii. 4—8.
Epistle	Hebrews i. 1—12.
Gospel	St. John i. 1—14.
Proper Psalms, Morning,	xix., xlv. lxxxv.
Evening,	lxxxix., cx., cxxxii.

" Furthermore, it is necessary to everlasting salvation that" we " believe rightly the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ. For the right faith is, that we believe, and confess, that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God, and Man: God, of the substance of the Father, begotten before the worlds; and man, of the substance of his mother, born in the world; perfect God, and perfect man."

This great truth, the perfect manhood, and perfect godhead of our Lord, is set forth in the services for this day with a clearness suited to its importance. Upon both points the prophecies appointed for the former lessons are most express. Born unto us a child, he is the Mighty God, and the everlasting Father. He is Immanuel, God with us; though the son of the virgin, brought forth in all the feebleness of infancy, and nourished with infant's food; for so the passage implies, " butter and honey, shall he eat, that he may know," or rather until he shall know, " to refuse the evil and choose the good."

The sign given to Ahaz in the evening lesson not only conveys the truth, but also, in its circumstances, figures the application. The sin of Judah, and especially of Ahaz, the most incorrigibly idolatrous of all her kings, had been visited in fearful judgment. Rezin, king of Syria, and Pekah, king of Israel, joined to invade it, and slaughtered, or carried away captive, such vast multitudes, that the victorious Israelites were terrified at the havoc they had made of their brethren, and sent back the prisoners. To increase the misery of the land, the Edomites and the Philistines ravaged it. Ahaz, unable to help himself, instead of turning to the Lord, sought help from the king of Assyria; and even robbed and defaced the temple to furnish a bribe for his alliance; but, says the sacred history, 2 Chron. xxviii. 20, he "distressed him, and strengthened him not." Amidst these sins and calamities, so well representing the guilty and lost condition of the human race, the mercy of God appeared. He sent a promise of deliverance by the prophet Isaiah, and offered to confirm it with a sign; which, when Ahaz, with a pretence of humility, refused to ask, God sternly rebuked his hypocrisy, and declared the illustrious prophecy which forms the evening lesson. It contains two distinct, yet connected promises; the one, to the existing distress of Judah, the other, for all mankind: to Ahaz, deliverance in the death of both the kings, before an infant should become old enough to distinguish between good and evil; to mankind, salvation through the Son of the Virgin, Immanuel. The first was speedily accomplished in the violent deaths of Rezin, and Pekah; and so became a pledge that the other should in due time be fulfilled in him, "who was conceived of the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin Mary."

All that the prophets foretold of the divine and human nature of our Lord, is confirmed by evangelists and apostles. They declare him, God from everlasting; the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person; the Creator and Preserver of all things; unchangeable, eternal; John i. 1—3; Heb. i. 1—3, 8—12. Lord of the angels, not because of his triumph on earth, but that "he hath by inheritance," as the Son of God, "obtained a more excellent name than they;" Heb. i. 4. Therefore, when the Father "bringeth in the first begotten into the world, He saith, and let all the angels of God worship him;" Heb. i. 6. Accordingly, when the angel proclaimed his birth, the multitude of the heavenly host praised God, saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men;" St. Luke ii. 13—14. As plainly they declare his manhood. "The word," which "was in the beginning," which "was with God," and which "was God," "was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory;" St. John i. 1, 14: and as it is written in another prophecy, Is. liii. 3, "he is despised and rejected of men," the evangelist adds, "He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not: he came unto his own, and his own received him not;" St. John i. 10, 11.

So, also, do the Old and New Testaments agree in describing the offices he should sustain. In his character of a teacher, the prophet says, "the people that walked in darkness have seen a great light;" and even names the very place of his ministry: Isa. ix. 1, 2, compared with Matt. iv. 12—16. The evangelist, "in him was life, and the life was the light of men," . . . "that was the true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world," St. John i. 4. 9. . . The apostle, "God, who, spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath, in these last days, spoken unto us by his Son," Heb. i. 1, 2. The prophet describes him as our Saviour and our King, Isaiah ix. 4—7: the apostle declares, that "when he had by himself purged our sins," he "sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;" Heb. i. 3.

Nor did he only bring wisdom and salvation, but also, in taking upon himself our nature, he exalted us to his own glory. "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to as many as believe in his name;" St. John i. 12. The heirs of the gospel are "born, not of blood," as the Jews inherited the former covenant by natural descent from Abraham; for the blessings of this, the new covenant, are to all who receive the Saviour. Nor

are they born "of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man;" for we obtain the privilege by no human exertion or merits; "not by works of righteousness which we had done;" Titus iii. 5. But they are born "of God;" St. John i. 13; who saved us "according to his mercy" "by the washing of regeneration," wherein we are made members of Christ, the children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven; and "the renewing of the Holy Ghost;" Titus iii. 5; by which their spiritual birth is made effectual to salvation: "that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life;" Titus iii. 7. To obtain the benefit of these our privileges we must be careful to observe our duty. Saved from the curse, we are bound to renounce the practice of sin. Called to be the sons of God, we are required to do the will of our heavenly Father. "This is a faithful saying,..that they which have believed in God, might be careful to maintain good works;" Titus iii. 8.

The proper Psalms agree in all things with the other services. They speak of our Lord as the Son of David, lxxxix. 1—4, 20—36, cxxxii. 11—19, who should come out of the city of David, Bethlehem Ephrata, cxxxii. 6, and pass through humiliation to his glory, cx. 7; yet as the Lord God, worshipped by the Church, and whose throne is for ever and ever, xlv. 7, 8, 12. They present him as our Prophet, xix., the Sun of Righteousness, whose doctrine, like the sun in the firmament, gives light and heat to all the earth, and whose law is not more excellent to instruct, than effectual to purify the heart. They present him as our Priest, made by the immutable oath of God a priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedec, cx. 4: who was a type of our Lord, in his character, as king of righteousness and of peace; in possessing his priestly office by particular and personal appointment, instead of inheriting it, like the Jewish priests, by descent from a father and a mother of the tribe of Levi; in having neither the beginning nor the end of his office recorded, which thus, by its indefinite duration, represents the unchanging and continual priesthood of Christ; and in the superior dignity of his office, proved by his receiving homage from Levi, and blessing him, in the person of his father Abraham, for "without question the less is blessed of the greater;" Heb. vii. 1—24. They present him as our King; exalted at the right hand of the Father, the rod of whose power shall go out of Sion, and who shall be ruler, even in the midst of his enemies, cx. 1, 2; whose sceptre is a sceptre of righteousness, xlv. 7; whose throne is established in truth and mercy for ever, lxxxix; who shall go forth, a glorious conqueror, with blessings for all that submit, xlv. 4—6; but casting beneath his feet the pride and strength of all opposition, cx. 1, 5, 6; who, in his gracious reign, vindicating the holiness of God, while he brings salvation to man, hath reconciled truth with mercy, and righteousness with peace, lxxxv. Finally, they present him, the Bridegroom of his church, which, beautified and exalted in his favour, and comforted with his presence, is called out of the world to be the object of his love, to serve him with holy worship, and to rejoice in the abundance of his blessing, xlv., cxxxii.

Thus should we commemorate his birth, exulting in the fulness of that grace, which, adapting itself to all our wants, draws from the deepest misery of our nature, subjects for the highest gratitude and joy. Are we spiritually dead? His word is effectual to quicken us! Blind? To enlighten us! Sinful? To purify us to perfect holiness! Our prayers are imperfect, and our best offerings most unworthy; but they are, notwithstanding, accepted through our High-priest, whose intercession we seek with confidence, knowing that he who took our nature upon him, can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities. We should faint before our enemies; but "the Lord is our defence: the Holy One of Israel is our King." We should tremble at the holiness and justice of God, whose face no man can see and live; but Christ in his human nature displays a love we can understand, and virtues we may imitate. In all the miseries we would escape, in all the blessings we would obtain, he is our refuge and hope. We were lost, but are now saved by his grace; dead, but renewed to live in him; enemies, but now reconciled; aliens, but now the sons of God. Let us, therefore,

remembering from what woes, and to what happiness, he hath redeemed us, walk after his most blessed example in all meekness and humility, as becometh our christian character; seeking the strength of his help in every trial, and the comfort of his presence in every sorrow; always rejoicing in him, who endured the cross, that he might redeem us from death; and humbled himself to our infirmities, that he might exalt us to his own glory.

SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS DAY.

Jesus our Saviour.

Morning Lesson . Isaiah xxxvii.
Evening Lesson . Isaiah xxxviii.
Epistle . . . Galatians iv. 1—7.
Gospel . . . St. Matthew i.18—25.

"And thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." Matt. i. 21.

The gospel for this day was changed at the Reformation from Luke ii., which is now applied to the Circumcision. The reason for appointing each of these portions is the same; to praise the Lord by his name Jesus, the Saviour, for the salvation he hath wrought; of which salvation the particulars are expressed in the other services for the day.

He saved us from our ghostly enemy. It was the first promise after the Fall, that the seed of the woman should bruise the Serpent's head; and to this promise the epistle refers, in saying, that "when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman." Of the salvation he thus wrought for us, the morning lesson affords a very significant type, in the condition of Jerusalem, besieged by the host of Sennacherib, and delivered by the divine power, in the miraculous destruction of the Assyrians.

He saved us from our sins. The hopeless condition of the sinner is well shown in that of Hezekiah, struck with a mortal disease, in which no human help could avail him, and for which the decree of death had gone forth; and the recovery of Hezekiah, through God's gracious and extraordinary interposition, as well expresses our own deliverance from the sentence of death, and restoration to the hope and blessings of spiritual life.

He saved us from the bondage of the law; as it is explained at length in the epistle, and brought us into the adoption of sons. "And because we are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father," in which Spirit we serve him with filial love, and in christian liberty. Yet not that we use our liberty for a licence to serve God carelessly; as if the Gospel, in releasing us from the bonds of the ceremonial law, loosened its moral obligations. They who are truly children of God are so renewed in Christ, that they now love that which he hath commanded, and desire that which he doth promise; therefore, they find God's service perfect freedom, not because they may now offend, but because they entirely choose, and delight in his ways.

In the words of Hezekiah's hymn of thanksgiving for prolonged life, contained in the evening lesson, we may praise God for our own deliverance from eternal death. "O Lord, by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit; so wilt thou recover me, and make me to live. Behold for peace I had great bitterness, but thou hast, in love to my soul, delivered it from the pit of corruption, for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back."

CIRCUMCISION.

The Seal of the Covenant.

Morning Lessons . Genesis xvii.—Romans ii.
Evening Lessons . Deuteronomy x. 12—22. Colossians ii.
Epistle . . . . Romans iv. 8 14.
Gospel . . . . St. Luke ii. 15 21.

The foundation of our hope is the covenant of God in Christ. The blessings of this covenant we obtain by faith; of which faith, it is the first and necessary evidence, that we observe those means, and fulfil those conditions, which God hath appointed. In this principle the Old and New Testament dispensations agree. The end and hope of the former, was the coming of the promised Messiah to put away sin, in faith of whose coming the children of Abraham were circumcised. The end and hope of the latter, is the resurrection of the

body; to which hope we are baptized into him, "who through the grave and gate of death hath opened to us a way to everlasting life."

The epistle for this day clearly explains that circumcision was a seal of the righteousness which is by faith; and the truth is illustrated in the first morning lesson, and the five preceding chapters. Abram was first called, Gen. xii., to leave his own country and his father's house, and go into a land which God would shew him; who promised to multiply and bless him, and that in him all families of the earth should be blessed." "By faith," says the Apostle, Heb. xi. 8., "he obeyed, and went out, not knowing whither he went." In the next chapter, v. 14—17, God renews the promise, to give the land, in which he was then sojourning as a stranger, to him and to his seed for a possession. In the xvth chapter, the child is promised through whom the blessing should be given; and though the promise was now against all natural possibility, "he believed in the Lord, and he counted it to him for righteousness." Finally, in the morning lesson for this day, twenty-four years after the first call of Abram, God renewed with him his covenant in Isaac, confirmed it by significantly changing his name to Abraham, and ratified it by the sign of circumcision; the nature and right use of which are explained in the epistle.

While this was a condition so essential to the enjoyment of the promised blessings, that whoever of the sons of Abraham should neglect it forfeited every privilege of his birth-right, they were not to rest on it as if nothing more was necessary. It was an emblem of purity of heart, and not a substitute; or, as the second morning lesson explains, v. 25—29, it was the outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace." The rite itself, an emblem of putting away the sins of the body, reminded the Jews of their own duty to seek the true circumcision of the heart, Deut. x. 16; and was calculated to raise their thoughts to God, and fix their dependence upon Him, who in the sign of the covenant gave a pledge of grace by which they might fulfil their part of its conditions: as it is elsewhere written, Deut. xxx. 6, "The Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live."

It is worthy of notice, that Ishmael also was circumcised, a fact which shews the true nature of the distinction made between Isaac and Ishmael, as afterwards between Jacob and Esau. In each case the younger was chosen to the distinguished honour of being the channel of blessings to all families of the earth: God, in passing by the elder, shewing the absolute freeness of his grace, which, as none could claim it, He gave according to his own will. But in the personal blessing, as far as the salvation of the individual was concerned, there was no distinction. Circumcision, the sign of repentance, faith, and holiness, was put equally upon both; and with the sign of grace was surely given the power to make that grace effectual. Indeed, though Ishmael was cast out, and Esau was rejected, God, by his own word for Ishmael, xvii. 20, and by the mouth of Isaac for Esau, xxvii. 39, 40, gave them every blessing, except the one of being father of the promised Messiah.

The conditions of the covenant of which circumcision was the sign, are declared in the first evening lesson; which in words of the most lofty eloquence presents an evangelical summary of the moral law:—to serve the Lord their God, to love Him, and fear Him, with all the heart, and with all the soul: and to love the stranger;—a command equivalent to loving their neighbour as themselves; for he who loves the stranger, will not fail towards neighbours and brethren. Since the Jews, puffed up with their own advantages, and despising others, were very prone to neglect this duty, it is enforced upon them by two powerful motives; the first, God's care for the stranger, v. 18, compared with Matt. v. 45; the second, remembrance of the distress from which they themselves had been delivered, "ye were strangers in the land of Egypt." To impress them with that humility which is so essential to faith and obedience, they are reminded that they derive their peculiar advantages from no merits of their own, but entirely from the grace of God, v. 15; and their attention is directed, v. 22, to the full accomplishment of one part of God's covenant with Abraham, in the increase of his posterity

"as the stars of the heaven for multitude;" a motive to assured faith in the second, and more important part, that in due time the promised seed should come, in whom "all families of the earth should be blessed."

This, as we are taught in the second evening lesson, was accomplished in Christ. "Made under the law, to redeem them that are under the law," he submitted to, and performed, every thing which it required, and delivered his people from its bondage. For being made complete in him our head, we obtain, with the other benefits of his perfect obedience, the grace figured in circumcision; as it is written, v. 11, "In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ." For this blessing we pray in the collect, and thus we plead his circumcision in the Litany, when we appeal to him for help by all that he hath done and suffered for us. In himself, and for us, he submitted to the rite; in himself and for us, he wrought the perfect obedience and holiness which it required. In him, the former covenant was complete, and its hopes fulfilled; and then, with the bringing in of a new and better covenant, all its ceremonial obligations were done away, *that* being accomplished which they were ordained to foreshadow.

The former was a covenant of pardon for rebels; it is succeeded by a covenant of blessing for children. The hope of the former was deliverance from sin by the coming of Christ; and the sign which ratified the promise was significant of putting away the sins of the body. The hope of the new covenant is victory over death by the resurrection; and the seal of it represents a very death unto sin, and new life in Christ; a putting off of our earthly nature, and being born into that spiritual nature which is from above. "We are buried with him in baptism, wherein also" we "are risen with him, through faith in the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead;" v. 12. As in the sign of circumcision there was an inward grace and power strengthening the faithful, so in this most blessed sacrament, the visible sign and seal of our adoption to be the children of God, we have the promise of the Holy Ghost to make our calling and birthright effectual; whose help, if we faithfully improve, we shall be daily renewed more and more after the image of God in Christ; "in whom whosoever believeth shall live, though he die." By this faith we live; and in this we commit the bodies of our departed friends to the ground, "in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord; who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the mighty working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS.

The Blessings of God's Covenant.

Morning Lesson . Isaiah xli.
Evening Lesson . Isaiah xliii.

The subject for the Circumcision is continued in the services for this day. There is the same collect, epistle, and gospel. The lessons for that festival explain the nature of God's covenant with us. Those appointed for the present day, the blessings He hath promised.

Every motive is offered in these chapters to unbounded trust in God. He asserts his power, as the Almighty, the Eternal, the first and the last, the only God and Saviour. He declares his goodness, and the favour He bears towards his people; to whom He makes himself known as "the Lord, *your* Holy One, the Creator of Israel, *your* King;" and whom he addresses as "the seed of Abraham, my friend;" a people whom he hath created and chosen, taken from the ends of the earth, redeemed, and called them by their name, that they might be his own people, precious in his sight, and honourable, the objects of his love. He appeals to the fulfilment of his former promises, and the deliverances He had wrought for them; the call of Abraham; the destruction of the kings and nations of Canaan, xli. 2, 3; the deliverance at the Red Sea; and the overthrow of Pharaoh, and all his host, xliii. 16, 17: and He predicts what should afterwards come to pass, the raising up of Cyrus to tread down Babylon

for their sake, and to restore them from their captivity, xli. 25; xliii. 14.

The power, goodness, and faithfulness of God in all that He hath done, give full assurance that He will also accomplish whatever He hath promised; and his promises embrace every thing the church can want or desire. There is help in all her dangers. "Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God; I will strengthen thee, yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee by the right hand of my righteousness," xli. 10. There is victory over all her enemies. Feeble though she may be, and they, great as the mountains, their portion shall be shame and destruction; she shall beat them small, the wind shall carry them away like chaff, and the whirlwind shall scatter them, v. 11—16. There is support in all her trials. "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burnt, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee: for I am the Lord thy God; the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour;" xliii. 2, 3. There is the fulness of spiritual blessings; xli. 17—20: blessings to satisfy the desire of the poor and needy; blessings for high, and low; springing up abundantly like rivers of water in dry places; refreshing the wilderness, and covering the desert with fruitfulness and beauty.

"Is He the God of the Jews only? Is He not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also." It is not enough that He should receive honour from none but the natural descendants of Abraham; or that the goodness of the Father of all should be confined to one only of the many families of the earth. The former things shall be no more remembered; the things of old, the imperfect ordinances of the ceremonial law, and the exclusive privileges of the Jews, no longer considered; xliii. 18—21. God will do a new thing, to bring in a new dispensation which shall extend its blessings to all the earth, even to the most desolate and waste places. He will make a way in the wilderness, and give the graces of his Spirit to barbarous and heathen lands, as rivers poured forth in the desert. Nations wild as the beasts of the field, and fierce as the dragons, shall see his mercy, and rejoice in his goodness: they shall honour his Name, and shew forth his praise.

Alas, for God's chosen people; the descendants of faithful Abraham: they have broken their covenant with God, and compelled Him for their sins to profane his sanctuary, and give them over to the curse, xliii. 28:—that fearful curse foretold as the punishment of their unfaithfulness, Deut. xxviii. 15—68, and now fulfilled upon them for 1800 years! But there is a blessing reserved for them. Their sorrow is not for ever. "God hath not cast away his people whom He foreknew." They are still "beloved for the fathers' sake." At length "they shall look on him whom they have pierced." They shall call to remembrance, and plead with God his loving kindnesses of old, the deliverances wrought for their fathers, and the mercies promised for them, xliii. 25, 26. They will humble themselves in penitence, and declare their faith, that they may be justified: and God, even their own God, will blot out their transgressions for his own sake, and "will no more remember their sins."

EPIPHANY.

The Manifestation of Christ.

Morning Lessons	Isa. lx. St. Luke iii. 1-22.
Evening Lessons	Isa. xlix. St. John ii. 1-11.
Epistle . . .	Ephesians iii. 1—12.
Gospel . . .	St. Matthew ii. 1—12.

In the early ages of the Church the name Epiphany was common both to Christmas day, and to this festival, that being distinguished as the greater, this as the lesser Epiphany. On this day, which was sometimes also called "the day of the Holy Lights," and sometimes, "the Theophany," or manifestation of God, the ancient Church celebrated our Lord's baptism. It directs our attention to various manifestations of the glory and divine power of Christ; which are severally commemorated in the appointed services.

He was manifested in his infancy by the Star which directed the wise men from the East. Whether these were influenced by the

prophecy of Balaam, Numbers xxiv. 17, or by the general expectation which prevailed, as we learn even from profane writers, that a King should arise in Judea, who would have dominion over all the earth, it is not necessary to inquire. God, who directed them by a miraculous token, would incline their hearts to follow it; that, as the first fruits of the Gentiles, they might offer to their Lord and King an earnest of the homage of the whole world.

He was more gloriously manifested, when, having attained the age at which the Levitical priests entered on their office, he went to prepare himself for his own ministry by his baptism. For he honoured all the observances of the Law, though they were to be done away in him; and entered not uncalled even upon the work for which he came into the world: thus leaving a rebuke for such as exalt their private judgment above lawful authority; and take upon themselves to administer his word and sacraments, in defiance of order, and with no warrant but their own presumption. Not so did our Lord, who would have been warranted, if any one, in disregarding the forms and restrictions appointed to be observed by men. He waited the time required by the Law, and then came in humility to be baptized of his own messenger, for that it became him to fulfil all righteousness; when "the heaven was opened, and the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape, like a dove upon him;" and "he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Thus adored of men, and owned of God, he was next manifested in his own divine power by the beginning of his miracles in Cana of Galilee. He had entered on his ministry, and three at least of his Apostles, Andrew, Peter, and Philip, John i. 40—43, were already among his followers. He now gave to them the first proof of his divine nature and mission: "This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory, and his disciples believed on him," John ii. 11.

He was manifested in the revelation of "the mystery, which from the beginning of the world had been hid in God," that in him the Gentiles should be made equal partakers of all the blessings of salvation: not merely admitted, as the Jews had supposed, an inferior race, favoured in being allowed to gather up the crums that fell from the children's table, but "fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promises in Christ by the gospel;" Eph. iii. 6. This mystery, "which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men," and of which the church itself remained ignorant long after the ascension of our Lord, was "revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit;" v. 5. First, by the vision which appeared to Peter at Joppa, and the descent of the Holy Ghost upon Cornelius and the Gentile believers at Cesarea; next, by the signal blessing of God upon the preaching of the gospel to the Grecians at Antioch, Acts xi. 20—26; afterwards, and more signally, by the labours and success of St. Paul. To him the grace of the apostleship was given, expressly, that he "should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery," v. 8, 9, even the equal hope and privileges of all men in him. Nor was this a new thing on earth, and to men only, but also in heaven and to the angels; who first understood the full extent and glory of redemption, when "to principalities and powers in heavenly places" was made "known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord;" v. 10, 11.

He shall yet be more gloriously manifested, when the prophecy in the morning and evening lessons being finished in the complete triumph of the gospel, the whole universal church shall be filled with God's glory. Every enemy shall then submit; kings and queens become nursing fathers and nursing mothers to the church, and the multitude of the nations make haste, and flow together into the sanctuary of God, which the excellency of the earth, and the blessing of heaven shall beautify. Then shall Christ be no more blasphemed by that stubborn and rebellious people, among whom he "laboured in vain, and spent his strength for nought:" they shall be redeemed and exalted, again beloved children,

and God shall comfort and enlarge them. In their blessing shall all the earth be blessed; "for if the fall of them were the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles, how much more their fulness: and if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead;" Rom. xi. 12—15. So shall Christ be exalted to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the desolations of Israel; to be a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the salvation of God unto the end of the earth; Isa. xlix. 4.

Thus God, who by the leading of a star manifested his only begotten Son to the Gentiles, will draw all the world to himself, and his Son Jesus; "that in him all nations, and all conditions, and all families, and all persons might be blessed, having called all by one star or other; by natural reason, or by the secrets of philosophy; by the revelations of the gospel, or by the ministry of angels; by the illuminations of the Spirit, or by the sermons and dictates of spiritual fathers; and hath consigned this lesson to us, that we must never 'appear before the Lord empty,' offering gifts to him by the expenses or the affections of charity; either the worshipping or the oblations of religion; either the riches of the world, or the love of the soul. For, if we cannot bring gold with the rich men from the east, we may, with the poor shepherds, come and 'kiss the Son, lest he be angry;' and in all cases come and 'serve him with fear and reverence,' and spiritual rejoicings."* This may God so enable us to do, that we, who know him now by faith, may after this life have the fruition of his glorious Godhead, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

* Bishop Jeremy Taylor.

PSALMS AND HYMNS

WRITTEN TO ILLUSTRATE THE SERVICES OF THE CHURCH.

III.

IMMANUEL.

Praise to the Lord, who left the sky,
Where Thrones and Powers his word obey,
And laid his awful glory by,
To dwell with us in mortal clay.

With us he bore the Tempter's strife,
And all the wo that sin has wrought;
Yet brightly through his spotless life,
Display'd the sacred truths he taught.

A friend and brother's name he gave
To those he suffer'd to redeem:
He rose to glory from the grave,
As we shall rise to reign with him.

His Holy Spirit leads us on
Where he, our great example trod;
And through his righteousness alone,
We come with humble faith to God.

IV.

THE NATIVITY.

Blest be thy happy morn,
O day of truth and grace;
The promised child is born,
The Saviour of our race:
Now shall the power of darkness fall,
And light and glory rise for all.

He breaks th' oppressor's rod;
He bears the key of heaven;
The awful names of God,
With power to him are given;—
Eternal Father! Mighty Lord!
On earth confess'd, in heaven adored.

All hail, incarnate God!
The power be thine alone:
O! spread thy truth abroad;
Exalt thy gracious throne;
Thy people bless; thy church increase;
And fill the earth with light and peace.

V.

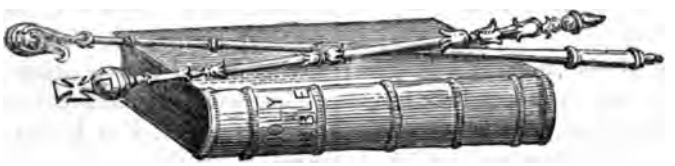
PRAISE FOR SALVATION.

Glory to God! with joyful adoration
Sing praises, sing praises, his power proclaim;
Praise we the Lord, the strength of our salvation,
And, worshipping before him, adore his name.

Praise him for mercies, blessings ever flowing,
His love, which redeemed us from death, make known;
Praise him in life, with holy rapture glowing:
Then worship with the angels before his throne.

Adapted to "Adeste Fidelis."

CHURCH AND KING.



"FEAR GOD—HONOUR THE KING."

No. III. JANUARY 1, 1837.

THE CHURCH AND DISSENT,

CONSIDERED IN THEIR PRACTICAL INFLUENCE.

CHAPTER III.

God's care of the Church of England, shewn in her History.

That practical Atheism, which never regards the hand of God while it marks the course of History, is not more to be condemned for its impiety than pitied for its folly. To the man who loves his Country, the truth is alike instructive and encouraging that her destinies are with Him whose purpose none can resist; and to whom conquerors, kings, and statesmen, are but instruments. To recognise and feel this truth will teach moderation in success, firmness in adversity, and integrity at all times. And if it be a duty thus to regard and trust God in secular affairs, how much more in whatever concerns the Church!

Without tracing all the circumstances connected with the Reformation in England, it is interesting to observe by what means a scriptural and orderly Church was formed out of the unpromising materials which then existed. Whether a struggle, or a compromise, should take place between the followers of Wicliffe, and the adherents of the Papacy, the result could be looked for only with anxiety. But the impetuous character of the King swept away every obstacle. To disclaim the Pope, suppress the monasteries, and give the most powerful families in the realm a direct interest in supporting the change, might have destroyed one error only to create another. But the extravagant vanity of Henry in dictating the faith of his subjects, his caprice, and the bloody tyranny with which he enforced his ever-changing creeds, were calculated to make all men hold their opinions loosely; and to prepare them, without partiality, and without prejudice, at length to seek the truth from its only source, the Bible. Henry was only a pioneer to prepare the way for the Reformation. He was removed when he had done his part; and the youth and piety of his successor, and the struggles for personal aggrandisement which engrossed the nobles, left Cranmer full power to accomplish the great work for which his learning, station, and character, so eminently fitted him.

The attempt to change the succession at the end of this reign, in other words, to depose the rightful sovereign, affords in its consequences one more proof of the folly, as well as sin, of distrusting God, and seeking desirable ends by wrong means. The success of the attempt would have given, as leaders for the Church and Country in the trials that awaited both, the selfish faction of which Lady Jane Grey was made the instrument, instead of the lion-hearted Elizabeth. Its failure enabled Mary to give full scope to her cruel bigotry, by placing in her power as traitors those whose influence might have checked her. Yet, though the policy of man th

defeated its object, God vindicated his own cause by establishing the Protestant Church through sufferings, and making the triumph and cruelty of her enemies work their own destruction.

The character of the different sovereigns, the order of their succession, and the length of their respective reigns, were in every point made subservient to the interests of the Church. The violence of Henry prepared the way: through the youth und piety of Edward, the Reformation was organized: the cruelties of Mary endeared it to the people: the wisdom and courage of Elizabeth established it: even through the pedantry of James, the Church derived an inestimable blessing, our present authorized translation of the Bible. The weakness, folly, and crimes of men, as well as their strength, wisdom, and virtue, were all over-ruled to the one great object, and made to work together for good.

A Church is strengthened by persecution from without; but far more formidable is the trial when she is to be freed from errors and corruptions within. For then must she be cast into the fire, which shall burn up all human inventions, and leave only her divine materials. To this trial was the Church of England now to be exposed.

Most of the reformed Churches had established themselves only after a deadly struggle with Popery, which had greatly blended party hostility with their purer motives. Anxiety to avoid what they detested hurried them to extremes; and instead of contenting themselves with rejecting the corrupt inventions which Popery had added to the truth, they rejected with the corruption the truth itself. The apostolic order of bishops was considered as a part of popish tyranny and pride. The decencies of public worship, so happily preserved in the Church of England; her Liturgy, so scriptural, and transmitted from the purest ages of Christianity; and the orders of her ministry, which had existed for centuries before the corruptions of Rome were known, all were condemned as relics of Popery. The dreadful cruelties by which the Papists endeavoured to regain their ascendancy, the burnings in England, the massacre of St. Bartholomew in France, the Spanish Armada, and the Gunpowder Treason, contributed to strengthen this feeling; till abhorrence at whatever bore the remotest semblance to Popery had become the ruling principle in England.

With this feeling was connected a system of theology entirely opposed to the comprehensive spirit and orderly practice of the Church of England, and essentially republican in its tendency. For, if it be true that a part of mankind are absolutely elected to eternal life, while the rest are as absolutely reprobated, or abandoned to inevitable perdition, it is absurd to include these malignants with the saints in the enjoyment of church privileges; still more absurd to allow them to interfere in the government of God's church; and monstrous, that any one of them should become a minister and teacher of religion. They who assume to be elect will therefore separate themselves from a reprobate world, unite into little societies, to which they would confine church privileges, exercise their own judgment in deciding on the pretensions of those who apply for admission, and especially, on the gifts and graces of their minister. Here we have complete Independency, modern Dissent, in fact; that is, voluntary and separate churches, restriction of power and privileges to church-members, admission to membership by vote of the church, the assertion of the right to observe and judge the minister, and the assumption of all authority by the people, to whom their nominal ruler is but a servant. All this, and more, is the necessary consequence of following out the principles of Calvinism; and those Clergymen and others in the Church, who contend that the Reformation was incomplete, because it made no provision for that discipline which distinguishes the church from the congregation, would do well to observe the consequences of this first step; nothing less, in the end, than the transfer of all power from the governors to the governed, and the establishment of a principle subversive of the Church and the Throne. Indeed, if they would be consistent, they should reject infant baptism; for it is mockery to administer this sacrament to an infant whose perdition has been sealed from all eternity by an absolute and irreversible decree. The Baptists, who confine this sacrament to such adults as have given satisfactory proof of being elect, are the only consistent Calvinists. It is worthy of

remark, that they are also the most democratic of all sects. They generally refuse to observe even Christmas-day and Good Friday; and, latterly, very many of their ministers have ceased to call themselves "Reverend;" as a public assertion of the levelling principle. It is another consequence of this system, that a learned ministry must be given up; for a candidate must be of mature age before he could establish his pretensions to the office, and the late student must possess extraordinary talent if he become a ripe scholar.

At the time when Calvinism so greatly prevailed in England, it was very different indeed from that which at present bears its name. Little now remains of it but some modifications in particular doctrines, which were necessary to make these doctrines agree with that of absolute election; and those who are called Calvinists would shrink with horror from asserting that there is a large portion of their brethren who are mocked with offers of salvation, while God has made it impossible for them to be saved. But at that time this horrible blasphemy was so prominently maintained, that it was a subject of controversy whether God had created the reprobate expressly that they might perish, or had only ensured their perdition, by making their escape from it impossible without that help, which, before he created them, he had determined to withhold. The effect of such a principle would be pharisaical pride in those who assumed to be the favourites of Heaven, with all the bitterness of scorn and hatred for their opponents, as the enemies of God and man: such feelings as the Jews cherished for themselves, and toward the Samaritans, at the very time when for their own guilt God had cast them off to fill the measure of their crimes before they should be visited in judgment with utter desolation.

The Church was deeply tainted with these dreadful principles; and Archbishop Abbott sealed her fate, and that of the monarchy, by promoting them with all his influence. For when the bulk of the community cherish feelings which are entirely opposed to existing forms of government, revolution becomes inevitable.

In the fearful crisis which took place, we still see God's goodness, and care over the Church. Had the great struggle occurred some years sooner, the Puritans might have have been put down for the time; but it would have been only to renew the contest with every advantage of character, for they would have claimed the honours of martyrdom, while the Church would have been branded as a persecutor. On the other hand, if the question had been delayed, the Church must have gradually sunk, for already were many of her friends desirous to obtain peace and union, even by modifications in episcopacy, which must have ended in the extinction of the order. But happily, Archbishop Laud, by attempting to check the evil, brought the question to a crisis; too late to save the Church from temporary subversion, yet in time to enable her to enter the conflict with her principles not yet compromised, and her character unimpaired.

To ascribe the Great Rebellion to national grievances is most absurd. A parliament supported by the Country, and strong enough to compel the King to give up his minister and friend to be judicially murdered, could have no difficulty in correcting whatever might be justly complained of. From the first, it was the struggle for ascendancy of a principle hostile to the monarchy; not reform, but revolution. Conservative reforms are directed to practical objects; they are conducted peaceably, and constitutionally; and the struggle ceases with the removal of the grievance. Revolutionary innovations are directed to change the institutions of the Country, because they interfere with the selfish views of the agitators; who value real or pretended grievances only as a means to this end, and always use their success as a vantage ground to further aggressions.

It is not necessary to dwell upon the crimes and follies of opponents. Whatever difference of opinion may exist on the circumstances of the rebellion, there can be none as to the result. The Puritans, with whom was the strength of the nation; who achieved a triumph so complete as to leave them nothing more to overthrow: who sealed the destruction of the Church and the Monarchy with the blood of the primate and of their King; who possessed themselves of the Church and the State, to model, and to use, according to their own pleasure, yet perished;—perished

without an enemy, unpitied, scorned, and abhorred by the nation. The vengeance of a conqueror could not have crushed them so completely.

The Church, her primate murdered, her clergy proscribed, her constitution abolished, her worship made penal, her friends defeated and scattered, her enemies established in her place, with all her possessions and power transferred to them, was destroyed, to all appearance, utterly and irretrievably. But in a very few years all that was opposed to her suddenly passed away, "as a dream when one awaketh," while, without any apparent human means, she was as suddenly restored, and established in honour, unity, and power, such as she had never known before. Results like these mock the calculations of man; but they quite accord with all His dealings, who vindicates his sovereignty by leading his people through weakness and distress to their triumph; and suffers the enemies of his Church to be exalted, only that they may be cast down to utter shame and ruin.

When James II. attempted to re-establish Popery, the firmness and integrity of the Church saved the Country. And the bishops who were the chief instruments of this deliverance nobly proved their disinterestedness, when they allowed themselves soon after to be deprived of their dignity; and retired to obscurity and poverty, because they would not sanction the deposition of their oppressor; believing that the other branches of the Legislature could not lawfully exercise that extreme power.

Triumphant over the rage of Popery and Democracy; and strengthened, and purified through their persecutions, the Church was next to be exposed for a long course of years to the pestilential influence of demoralizing national corruption. For when through the greater part of the last century a few families grasped the government, without possessing the confidence of the nation, they were driven to maintain themselves in place by corrupt practices. Every office was made a bribe; and where patronage failed, money secured the required object. For political enemies, there was the power of the State to crush, and the hired libeller to vilify. Every question, whether of foreign or domestic policy, of peace, or of war, was made subservient to the one great object of government, keeping the ministry in place. As to the State, that was like a stranded wreck for every one to plunder. While a show of decency was observed, little indeed was required, public men, under the cloak of perquisites of office, might enrich themselves as they pleased. All had a common interest to support and screen one another; and only the honest man had any thing to fear, for the whole pack was interested to hunt him down. Even the triumphant administration of Chatham could not obtain for him the favour of the party, nor his popularity support him against its influence. The treasures lavished upon undeserving characters formed the least evil of the system. As far as its influence extended, it demoralized the Country, till public honesty and virtue became a jest.

One influential class of the community was safe from contamination; the country gentlemen, who lived on their estates, cherishing in themselves and their dependants the sterling traits of the old English character, and looking on corrupt ministers with contempt. Their influence in their neighbourhood was most beneficial; for a cordial intercourse between the different classes of society fosters the best virtues of the poor. The clergy, as a body, were identified with the country gentlemen; and the difficulties of communication, when the roads were scarcely passable for half the year, made the clergyman the general companion of the 'squire, and they usually acted together in whatever concerned the parish.

This most probably saved the Country and the Church; but the benefit was not without alloy. The country gentlemen did not generally possess those intellectual resources which are essential to men of fortune and leisure; but are not easily acquired except in society. Nor is this a mere question of refinement. Animal enjoyments, which the poor may enjoy with safety, because their leisure and means are limited, become riot and excess with the wealthy and unoccupied.

Thus the example of their lay patrons and associates was every where calculated to hurt the clergy. In Town, corruption lifted its shameless front, and laughed virtue out of countenance. Field sports, rural merriment,

and riotous hospitality, prevailed in the country. And not many men possess that independence of character, and strength of principle, to form and live up to a standard greatly above that of all their associates.

Two great evils were justly to be apprehended from these circumstances;—a gradual corruption of the truth, the natural consequence of corruption of morals; and the prevalence of a cold, formal religion, effectual indeed to promote the general interests of society, but falling infinitely short of that surrender of the heart which God requires. For each an adequate corrective was provided, and both were found in the Church.

The increasing prevalence of the Arian heresy in England, as well as on the Continent, had already called forth a powerful champion of orthodoxy in Bishop Bull, when, in the early part of the last century, that heresy found an advocate in a distinguished member of the University of Cambridge, Dr. Samuel Clarke; whose talents, if any thing, would have maintained, and whose virtues, if any thing, would adorn, the tenets he asserted. Appealing from the Nicene Fathers to the Bible, and finding the equal godhead of the Son explicitly asserted there, he affirmed that the divine attributes of the second and third Persons in the Trinity, though infinite, were communicated by the Father, whom he termed the Supreme God. As this was so evidently at variance with the faith of the Church, he contended that any man may lawfully subscribe the articles in any sense in which he can reconcile them with the Scriptures; a principle which destroys the value of all tests and creeds.

His system had the common fate of heresy, to be the indirect means of providing new bulwarks for the truth. His positions were ably disputed; till at length Waterland smote him with the force of a giant, and exposed to the satisfaction of every candid mind the fallacy of his hypothesis, and the dishonesty of Arian subscription. The intense interest which the controversy excited, from the high reputation of Dr. Clarke, made his decisive overthrow a permanent security for the truth; for it would be rashness to contend on ground where he had been so signally vanquished; and the heresy could not be advanced in terms more moderate and guarded than those he had maintained.

On the second point, it ought to be declared, whoever may be offended, that John Wesley was a mighty instrument in the hand of God for imparting inestimable blessings to the Church of England. It is not necessary to exalt his personal character at the expense of others. Many a parish priest, not his inferior in talent, holiness, and zeal, may have laboured all his life, scarcely known beyond his own parish. Nor is it necessary to exhibit him as perfect, or to qualify our praise by the discovery of human imperfections. Men the most favoured of God, not excepting prophets and apostles, have their traits of human weakness. It is enough that he was eminently fitted for the great task assigned to him. The character of men so appointed is not to be judged by ordinary standards. The traits which peculiarly fit them for the elevated and extended sphere they are called to fill, become faults in others.

Wesley's great object,—to which, with a zeal that never tired, and a singleness of heart that never swerved from its purpose, he devoted all his energies to the end of a life extended twenty years beyond the term of man,—was to present and enforce through all the land the pure and exalted model of scriptural holiness. He fixed the public attention, and made a powerful impression; admired and followed by multitudes, and long opposed by the great majority. Let not these be severely blamed. Irregular proceedings are almost always mischievous, and ought therefore always to be discountenanced. If the work be of God, it will be honoured and strengthened by opposition; and at last, it will vindicate itself by its fruits.

Wesley was a devoted admirer of the Church of England, of which he was an ordained priest, and from which, through his college fellowship, he derived his support while he pursued his early itinerant labours. He declared, and with undoubted sincerity, that his object was not to draw the people from the Church, but to make them better Churchmen. Afterwards, when from circumstances, which he has related with great simplicity and candour, he had become the leader of a sect this made no change in his principles. He

still impressed his societies with the duty, and even necessity, not merely of maintaining friendly dispositions towards the Church, but also of attending on her ministrations, and regarding Methodism only as an auxiliary. "When we forsake the Church," he said, "God will forsake us."

He probably made this declaration from religious confidence in God's presence with the Church, and appointment of Methodism to be her helper: but even as a philosophical deduction from the constitution of his societies, it is fully borne out by their history, state, and prospects. Like the Church, Methodism is comprehensive and orderly, with fixed principles of doctrine and discipline. It is established by the law, under the government of ministers, who are separated to their office, appointed by ministerial authority alone, secured in easy circumstances, and invested with power over their people. The "circuits" through which it labours, are, in fact, very large parishes; and its "districts," each with its "chairman," may be compared to archdeaconries. Nothing is required for admission to all the privileges of membership, beyond a declaration to the superintending preacher of the applicant's desire to "flee from the wrath to come," and his readiness to submit to the discipline of the society; a restriction which accords in spirit with our own rubric on admission to the Communion. Every duty, whether spiritual or secular, is assigned to a proper officer; and every officer is restricted to his own duty. Members belong to the circuit in which they reside, like parishioners to their parish church. The support of the preachers is derived from personal tithes paid by the members, in small weekly sums to their class leaders, and larger quarterly sums on the renewal of their certificates of membership. Wesleyan ordination is presbyterian, the apostolic succession being preserved through Mr. Wesley. As episcopalians, we cannot sanction this; but it is not to be compared in principle with a self-appointed ministry; and in practice, it is authoritative, orderly, and effective. Whenever there is service in church hours they are required to use the liturgy, or Mr. Wesley's abridgment of it, or at all events the appointed lessons for the day; but the liturgy, or the abridgment, is strongly recommended.

It is also recommended, and was formerly imperative, that the members receive the Communion in their parish church; but soon after Mr. Wesley's death, the Conference found it necessary so far to yield this point, as to allow it to be administered by their own preachers. This permission, however, is given under restrictions, which are a standing protest against the innovation; and it is not allowed to be administered on the same day as in the church;—a regulation, valuable as a mark of respect, and important as a continual memorial of the leading principle and object of the Society. They have two orders of ministers, — "preachers in full connexion," and "preachers on trial," corresponding to priests and deacons. Only the former are allowed to administer the sacrament. The service is the same as in the Church, and the people receive it from the preacher, kneeling round the rails of the Communion table.

Methodists are careful not to use words which might either represent them as dissenters, which they utterly disclaim, or else seem to appropriate what belongs to the Church. They never speak of their "Ministers," but call them "Preachers." They never call their collective body, or their separate circuits, a Church, or Churches; but the members in every circuit a "Society," and their whole body the "Societies," or the "Connexion;" as not being a distinct sect, but associations, united for Christian fellowship under the instruction and guidance of their own preachers, yet remaining members of the Church. In villages, and country places, they generally attend the parish church, and hold their own services at an hour not to interfere with this duty. In towns and populous parishes, if this were desired, it would clearly be impossible.

Methodism is quite opposed to the principle of Dissent. It cannot blend with democracy, and the chief danger against which it has to guard, arises from a part of its system which has a democratic tendency. The regular preachers, being unequal to the work of their circuits, which are large, and usually contain many places of worship, avail themselves of

the assistance of lay-helpers, called "local preachers," who are appointed by the superintending preacher of the circuit, and officiate under his directions and authority. The Society is thus enabled to extend its operations greatly without additional expense; but much prudence and decision are required to guide the agents.

The danger from this part of the machinery is two-fold:—to doctrine; from men, often uneducated and partially informed, confounding sectarian peculiarities with Christian truth, and animal excitement with religion; and therefore stimulating the feelings, instead of informing the judgment of their congregations:—and to discipline; from the people confounding pulpit ability with ministerial authority; and thus being prepared to undervalue their preacher, when from any cause unpopular; to support a disorderly local preacher in his insubordination; and, perhaps, to go off with him, should his unreasonable demands be resisted. In almost all the secessions which have taken place from Methodism, and in the new sects which have been formed in consequence, local preachers have been the prominent leaders, as well in promoting the revolt, as in carrying into effect the consequent organization.

The only effectual security against these evils is found in maintaining the original principle of the Society, by keeping close to the Church. The Liturgy, with the fullness and order of the Scripture services connected with it, is the best security against false, or imperfect doctrine; and as long as the people respect the clergy, they will never dispute the authority of their own preachers.

I expressed this opinion last year to a superintendent, of much observation and sound judgment. "I can confirm your remark," he replied, "by examples within this circuit. In the next parish, we have a society of about sixty members, who regularly attend their parish church, and receive the sacrament there. They are united among themselves, and give their preachers no trouble. At ——, we have a society who never go to church, and their conduct is altogether as disorderly. I told them, but the last time I was there, that if they would go to church whenever it is open, they would learn to behave better in their own place of worship."

To Methodism must be ascribed much of the merit of having, through the last century, quickened with life and warmth the Christian truth which the Church maintained.* Nor is this the only benefit which we are bound cordially to acknowledge. It has greatly diminished the dangers of the present crisis, by having saved from Dissent, if not from irreligion, the million of people whom it instructs. The official declaration of a common feeling and interest with the Church, which it made, through the Conference, when the Church was apparently in extreme peril, ought never to be forgotten. And it has very materially contributed to the peace and safety of the Church, by its unqualified, firm, and consistent hostility to Calvinism, and the contempt it has poured by its zeal and character upon that assumption, which claimed the name of "the Gospel" exclusively, for the narrow peculiarities of its own creed. If Methodism had not fought this battle for us without the Church, it is more than probable that we should have had to fight it within.

A formal union of Methodism with the Church, or even a formal recognition of it, would afford no benefit to either; while it would greatly cramp the energies of Methodism, and compromise the Church. But it is most desirable that they should so understand one another, that no unfounded prejudice may be allowed to exist: that the feelings of parent and child may be established in their fullest cordiality; and that they may feel their common interest in each other's prosperity. The Church can have no safer and better auxiliary in parishes too large and populous for her own effective ministrations; and Methodism will find that the more Church principles are appreciated, the more its own peace will be secured, and its prosperity extended.

* I must not be misunderstood here, as asserting more than the fact. I speak not so much of the direct results produced by Mr. Wesley and his societies; for in forty-three years the numbers in connexion with Methodism had scarcely reached to 40,000; but to the indirect consequences of the powerful impression he made on the public mind, which roused many to observe, think, and do their duty, who else would have slumbered on.

THE CHURCH ESTABLISHED ON THE BIBLE.

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY.

God, who redeemed us, claims our devoted service.

Morning Lesson . .	Isaiah, xliv.
Evening Lesson . .	Isaiah, xlvi.
Epistle	Romans, xii. 1—5.
Gospel	St. Luke, ii. 41—52.

There are portions of Scripture which condemn the guilt of idolatry more strongly than the lessons for this day, but none which pour such contempt upon its folly. The stock of a tree, part employed for the meanest uses, and the residue carved into a god, and adored by its own maker;—the idols of Babylon, thrown upon the weary beasts of burden, and carried away among the spoils of the conqueror;—these, and the infatuation of their deluded worshippers, are described in words of surpassing scorn. The force of the description is heightened by the fact, that for vanities like these the Jews forsook the Lord, deaf to the warnings of his prophets, and blind to every display of justice and mercy; till their land was given over to desolation, their city and temple to ruin, and themselves to long captivity.

In these chapters the shame of the fathers is recorded for a warning to the children, and the mercies of God Almighty for their hope. The Lord, the only God, gracious in his purposes, and faithful to his promise;—who declares the end from the beginning, and none may control his will; here foretels the deliverance of the Jews from Babylon, and appoints the conqueror by his name, Cyrus, whom he would raise up to restore them. Even this is foretold chiefly as the pledge of a far greater redemption, which comprehends deliverance from spiritual bondage; pardon for all their sins; the love and care of a gracious father; an overflowing of spiritual blessings: a redemption of such happiness and glory, that all creation is called to exult in it. "Sing, O ye heavens, for the Lord hath done it: shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein; for the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel;" xliv. 23.

The intermediate chapter describes the circumstances which should attend the siege and taking of Babylon, and shows that the promised redemption shall be complete and universal; Israel shall be saved with an everlasting salvation, v. 17; and all the earth shall come to serve and honour God, v. 22—25.

The Apostle explains this subject, the restoration of Israel, and the gathering in of the fullness of the Gentiles, in the context to the epistle, Rom. xi. Thence he proceeds in the epistle itself to enforce our duty, beseech-us, "by the mercies of God," displayed in this salvation, to "present our bodies a living sacrifice," by devoting ourselves entirely to Him; "holy," for the sacrifice brought to God's altar must be without blemish; "acceptable to God," by offering it as He appoints, and in the spirit He requires; which is our "reasonable service," as to our Maker, who formed us for himself; our Father, who watches over us, and our Saviour, who hath redeemed us. To this end, we must guard against a worldly spirit, so fatal to religion, and seek to be "transformed by the renewing of our mind," after the image of Christ, that we "may prove," that is, know, and faithfully practise, "that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God."

Moreover, we must serve God with the talents He hath given, and in the station He hath assigned. As the members of the natural body perform, some a more honourable, others a subordinate office, but each its own,—so we, who are one body in Christ, and members one of another, must perform our respective parts to his glory, and the common advantage, according to his appointment. To repine at our allotted place, is as if any member of the natural body should refuse to perform its own function because another is more honoured. God requires from us the duties of our station, whatever that station may be, whether to govern, or to obey; and in them only can we

expect his blessing. Let no man, therefore, "think of himself more highly than he ought to think;" but with the gift entrusted, and in his own allotted place, let him serve God faithfully, with soberness of mind, and in a spirit of humility and contentment, of piety and benevolence.

Thus Jesus, though he knew himself to be the Son of God, as appears from the answer to his mother, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business," yet was subject to his earthly parents; and he, who was the Lord God, their Creator and Redeemer, observed all the duties of the station to which he humbled himself; the submission of a child, the obedience of a son, the meekness of uncomplaining poverty. Nor is this the only lesson to be learnt from this day's gospel.—It shows the blessing of early religious instruction, and the beauty of early piety. The journey was long from Nazareth, yet at twelve years old he went up to Jerusalem with his parents to the passover; and at that early age was found seeking instruction in the Temple. Thus should children be carefully instructed from their earliest years in the truths and duties of religion, and taught to reverence God's house, and to love his service. This is enforced by their baptism, of which the inward and spiritual grace, duly improved, will enable to fulfil the obligations. God commands it, whose blessing always attends obedience; and it is reasonable that we should serve Him with the vigour of youth, and not wait, at a risk how fearful! to offer the mere dregs of existence, the miserable remnant of a life whose prime has been given to sin. Youth is in itself the season most favourable to religion. The affections, now warm and susceptible, are free to be engaged with proper objects. The habits, yet to be formed, may be confirmed in a course of right action. The vain reasonings of false philosophy, which turn so many from the humble and happy confidence of religious faith, the corrupting influence of sensuality, and the allurements of the world, are yet unknown; and though the sad effects of the Fall appear even in the infant, the control of a steady discipline will check, and the hallowing influence of early piety subdue them. And in after life, when we have survived the teachers whom we reverenced, and the friends whom we loved with the ardent and pure affections of childhood, sweet is the memory of holy duties to which they guided us, of sacred precepts which they taught us, and of happy feelings which first made us know the pleasantness of religion.

We must consecrate the child to God, if we would have a good hope that the man shall be devoted to his service. As a tender plant is directed to clasp the prop which shall support it, so should the first affections of his young heart be directed to the love of Jesus; the first enquiries of expanding reason, to the example of Jesus; and the first lispings of childhood formed to prayer in his name. Then, should it please God to prolong his days, we may trust, and with a good hope, that, like Jesus, he will "increase in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man."

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY.

Brotherly love enforced by the obligations of Redemption.

Morning Lesson . .	Isaiah li.
Evening Lesson . .	Isaiah liii.
Epistle	Romans xii. 6—16.
Gospel	St. John ii. 1—11.

As God fulfilled the promise made to Abraham, whom he called when he was alone, and blessed him, and increased him, li. 2; so will he comfort and increase the Church, feeble though it may be, and bless it with holiness and joy, even as the beauty and happiness of Eden, v. 3. As in the ancient days the arm of the Lord destroyed Egypt, and made a path for his own people through the depths of the sea, v. 9, 10, so will he cast down every enemy, and make a way through whatever obstacle, that his redeemed may return, and come with singing to Zion, crowned with everlasting joy," v. 11. The blessing is sure; for God, whom none can withstand, is the salvation and strength of his people; 12—16: and his righteousnes, which endures when heaven and earth shall pass away, is pledged to fulfil it; 4—7.

But to estimate the value of redemption, we must consider not only the blessing we

obtain, but also the misery from which it saved us, and the means by which it was effected. The first is well represented in the morning lesson, v. 17—21, in the wretched and helpless condition of Jerusalem in her guilt and bondage; the second is described in the evening lesson; a prophecy so plain, and so exactly fulfilled in the humiliation and sufferings of Christ, that it seems rather a description of the past than a prediction of the future.

When God came to deliver his people from Egypt, it was with the glory of divine majesty, and the terrors of almighty power. But when Christ came in our nature to save us by making himself an offering for sin, he stooped to shame and sorrow. He was "despised and rejected of men;" He was led, an uncomplaining victim, to death! a death attended with every circumstance of torture and ignominy. All our hopes and blessings spring from what he hath endured: our joy from his sufferings; our glory from his humiliation; our life from his death. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends:" "but while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

"Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another." Our common interest claims this, and our christian obligations enforce it. Christ is our example, as well as our sacrifice; and as the evening lesson shews what he suffered for us, the epistle teaches us what we should do for our brethren. Every one is called to employ his own gift for the general good;—to employ it in a proper manner, giving with simplicity; ruling with dilgence; shewing mercy with cheerfulness;—to employ it in a proper spirit, a spirit of undissembled love. Not, however, to display that false kindness that winks at sin, or the weakness that yields to partake in it. We must "abhor that which is evil," and "cleave to that which is good." Seeking the happiness and honour of others with brotherly affection and unfeigned humility, we must reconcile in all our conduct the claims of society with the homage due to God: and while we serve Him with fervency of spirit, and seek his blessing with continual prayer, we must adorn our Christian profession in the eyes of men, by diligence in business, cheerfulness in our trials, patience under affliction, kindness, and hospitality. Active benevolence towards enemies is a temper hard to exercise; but Christianity requires, the example of our Lord commends, and the Apostle lays peculiar stress upon this, by repeating the injunction, "bless them that persecute you; bless and curse not." Finally, and generally, he exhorts to sympathize with another's joy and sorrow; to cherish unity of disposition; to "mind not high things," a temper which fosters vanity and envy, but to "condescend to men of low estate," by which we shall at once comfort and encourage them, and learn to be cheerful and contented in our own station. Happy for the world when all men shall walk by these rules!

The gospel teaches that religion imposes no restraint upon the cheerful enjoyments of social intercourse. It forbids nothing which deserves the name of pleasure. Sin that leads to remorse, vanity that ends in disappointment, indulgence that injures health, dissipation that interferes with duty, whatever enervates the mind, or deadens spirituality, or exposes to misconception, or offends weak brethren, is condemned. But innocent recreation, and festive hospitality, not carried to excess, are harmless, and indeed useful. They promote cordial feelings in society; and the mind, thus unbent for a time, returns with renewed vigour to its labours. That purest and highest model of religion which we have in the example of our Saviour, presents nothing gloomy. He sanctioned by his presence the festivities of a Jewish wedding, always celebrated with much pomp, and kindly wrought a miracle to relieve a poor friend from the humiliating exposure of his poverty, in a deficiency of the requisite means of entertainment. Thus it is the duty of Christians not to separate themselves from society, but to improve it by their influence and example; at once commanding respect by their consistency. and winning esteem by their cheerfulness and courtesy.

Another point claims attention in the gospel. Marriage, when hallowed by religion, is the most effectual means of promoting the duties urged in the epistle. As it is the chief source of individual and social happiness,—opening new and better hopes, when the hopes of childhood and youth are faded away, and blessing with new and and per-

manent affections when time and death have blighted the former;—so it promotes all the social virtues; awakening, and calling into exercise, the strongest affections of our nature, and destroying selfishness by making our happiness depend on promoting that of others. It is therefore with great propriety that the services for this day, which show the nature and obligation of our social duties, should direct attention to that holy and happy institution which is so intimately connected with them all: an institution consecrated by God's appointment in Paradise; honoured by the sanction of our Lord's presence, and as the object of his first miracle, and sanctified in being chosen to represent the mystical union between Christ and his Church.

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY.

The character of the Gospel.

Morning Lesson . .	Isaiah lv.
Evening Lesson . .	Isaiah lvi.
Epistle	Romans xii. 16—21.
Gospel.	St. Matt. viii. 1—13.

Free are God's invitations, and rich the blessings to which He calls us: "Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money: come ye, buy, and eat: yea, come; buy wine and milk, without money and without price," lv. 1.

So, "on the last day, that great day of the feast" of tabernacles, on which the Jews drew water in a golden vessel from the pool of Siloam, and poured it, mixed with wine, upon the sacrifice in the temple, to commemorate the gift of water at Horeb, and to implore the blessing of rain for the approaching seed-time, "Jesus stood, and cried, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink;" St. John vii. 37.

The promise, confirmed by an everlasting covenant of mercy in Christ, v. 3, Acts xiii. 34, "who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth," v. 4, Rev. i. 5, is no less than eternal life. The appointed means whereby we obtain it, is the prayer of faith, with true repentance, v. 6, 7. In fulfilment of it, the word of God, as seed, is sown in the heart, and his blessing, as the rain of heaven, descends upon it, that it may spring up, and flourish to an abundant and joyful harvest. The heart is changed, as a desert reclaimed to fruitfulness; whose thorns and briars, its natural productions, are exchanged for plants of use, fragrance, and beauty; v. 9—13.

The conditions requisite to the possession of these blessings are stated in the evening lesson, v. 1, 2; to do righteousness, to observe the appointed means of grace, and to keep from evil; or, as it is promised for us in our baptismal vow, to repent, believe, and obey. All who observe these, without distinction, or respect of persons, have the promise of the blessing. They who feel their infirmities may find mercy, even the defence of God's right hand in all their dangers, and his help in all their necessities. The outcast cut off from society, and whom the law of Moses shut out from the congregation, is welcomed to every privilege of the Gospel. The stranger, no longer separated by a wall of partition, beyond which he saw the temple which he must not enter, is brought to God's holy mountain, and called to be joyful in his house of prayer, now a house of prayer for all people, where his offering of supplication and praise is accepted; v. 3—7.

The gospel for the day strikingly illustrates the prophecy. The miserable leper whom it was pollution to touch; and the centurion's servant, a stranger, the slave of a stranger, obtained, through the prayer of faith, full deliverance from their infirmities. But with mercy for the penitent, and blessings for the faithful, there is also judgment for the negligent. The evening lesson describes a corrupt church given over to destruction, v. 9—12; and when our Lord declares that "Many shall come from the east and from the west, and, shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven," he adds, "but the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

The privileges we enjoy have their corresponding duties. If we have been gathered in, though strangers, and reconciled, though enemies, it is reqnired of us that we shew to others the mercy in which we are blest. Love is the character of the Gospel;

and that widest display of love which extends even to enemies, is the peculiar distinction of the Gospel. We are taught in our prayers to ask forgiveness only as we forgive others. "I say unto you, love your enemies," was a precept which our Lord taught at the beginning of his ministry, and he closed it with a prayer for his murderers. With great propriety, therefore, the epistle for this day enforces a forgiving spirit, and teaches us to overcome evil with good: to subdue the enmity of others by unfeigned benevolence, returning kindness for injury, and blessing for cursing; and, what is of far more consequence to ourselves, to subdue our own proud and revengeful tempers, by cultivating lowliness of mind, a meek and peaceable disposition. So shall we be the children of our Father which is in heaven; whose peace will more and more abound in our hearts as we observe and do his will; and whose spirit will be more and more imparted, as we seek to be continually renewed after his image in love.

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY.

God our Sovereign and Protector.

Morning Lesson .	Isaiah lvii.
Evening Lesson .	Isaiah lviii.
Epistle . . .	Romans xiii. 1—7.
Gospel . . .	St. Matthew viii. 23—34.

God, the universal Sovereign, by whom all things subsist, and to whose dominion all must bow, is in a peculiar sense the Lord and King of his church. His people, as they are bound to Him by the closest relations, not only formed, but redeemed to himself, are obliged by their allegiance to corresponding duties. They must love Him with all their heart; honour Him with holy worship for his great Majesty; put their whole trust in Him, who is their sure defence and Saviour; and observe all his laws. Nor must they offer homage only to Himself; but also thankfully receive those whom He sets over them as the ministers of his authority, and faithfully serve, honour, and humbly obey them, in Him, and for Him, according to his blessed word and ordinance.

The lessons for this day trace the dealings of his government, and set forth his goodness and equity towards both his faithful and his disobedient subjects. "Peace, peace," is the portion of all who truly serve Him; peace in their life, lvii. 19; peace in their death, v. 1, 2. "But the wicked are like the troubled sea when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt; there is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." The rebellious people who turn away from Him to serve idols, v. 3—8; and the unfaithful, who seek deliverance from others than Him, v. 9—13, are punished in their own ways: but they who put their trust in God, remain in safety and quietness under his protection, v. 13: the High and Holy One who inhabiteth eternity, condescends to dwell with the lowly, to revive the spirit of the contrite, and to comfort the humble with his presence, v. 15—18. The hypocrite and self-deceiver, who pretend to serve Him while they follow their own devices, offering outward and formal homage, but turning from Him in their hearts, and denying Him in their lives, are exposed and warned, lviii. 1—5; but forgiveness is declared for the penitent, and blessings for all who work righteousness, love mercy, and faithfully observe the ordinances of God, v. 6—14.

It will have been observed, that all the Sundays after the Epiphany peculiarly set forth the glory of Christ. The first, while it proves his humanity, as a child increasing in wisdom and stature, and his divinity, as the Son of the Father, offers his example of humble obedience, and holy service. The second displays his condescension and benevolence, connected with the manifestation of his divine glory. The third shews him dispensing the blessings of the Gospel by miracles of significant meaning, declaring its comprehensive character in opposition to the restricted privileges of the law, but warning those who presume on God's favour. In the Gospel for this day, he, who is our Prince and Saviour, displays his power as the Sovereign and Lord of all, commanding with authority the unclean spirits, and controlling with his word the fury of the elements.

Thus we have confidence to put our whole trust in Him. There is no enemy whom *He*

cannot restrain, before whom the devils tremble; no danger in which *He* cannot save us, whose word the winds and the waves obey. We are "set in the midst of so many and great dangers, that by reason of the frailty of our nature we cannot always stand upright;" but He will "grant us such strength and protection as may support us in all dangers, and carry us through all temptations."

Therefore we must honour and obey Him; and not Him only, but those also whom he hath set over us. Christians "must honour and obey the King, and all that are put in authority under him;" cheerfully submitting to the laws; respecting his person and dignity; cherishing reverence and affection for him, as God's minister, through whom we obtain the blessings of orderly government; and praying fervently for God's blessing upon him, and upon ourselves and our country through him. This is no question of party, but a plain religious duty. God, in the epistle for this day, declares the truth, that He hath ordained Kings to reign as his ministers, to protect the good, and punish evil doers;—that whosoever resisteth them, resisteth his ordinance, and shall receive judgment;—that obedience is therefore an obligation of conscience;—and that we are bound as subjects to render to all their dues, honour, fear, tribute, custom. Thus all scandalous and libellous censures, whether by speaking or writing;—and all frauds upon the revenue, whether by smuggling, or by evading lawful charges, are entirely forbidden. The whole command is so clear, that he who can weaken its force and obligation, would find it easy to explain away any part of the Bible which may oppose itself to his views: and if the christians of Rome were required thus to submit to Nero, what palliation can there be for those who are disloyal to a christian and constitutional Prince?

This supreme authority is committed to the King, not for his own sake, but because the welfare of the people requires it. Their peace and safety are derived from the strength of the government, and this strength must be found in their conscientious obedience. A feeble government is a curse to the people; and in another part of Scripture, Isa. iii. 4, 5, God threatens it as a punishment. "I will give children to be their princes, and babes shall rule over them. And the people shall be oppressed, every one by another, and every one by his neighbour: the child shall behave himself proudly against the ancient, and the base against the honourable."

The features of democracy have not changed; the picture is still a perfect likeness.

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY.

God's dealings in the government of his Church.

Morning Lesson . .	Isaiah lix.
Evening Lesson . .	Isaiah lxiv.
Epistle	Colossians iii. 12—17.
Gospel	St. Matt. xiii. 24—30.

"We must receive God's promises in such-wise as they be generally set forth to us in Holy Scripture; and in our doings, *that* will of God is to be followed, which we have expressly declared to us in the word of God." His promise of blessing is qualified with the condition of obedience; and though the gates of hell shall never prevail against the Church, yet unfruitful and corrupt branches shall be cut away. We must not therefore apply God's promises absolutely either to ourselves or to any particular church. His Spirit will not always strive with those who resist or neglect Him. His help will supply the deficiencies of our strength; but we have no right to expect it for the deficiencies of our exertions. He gives more grace to them that improve it: He withdraws it from the negligent. "To him that hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have abundance; but from him that hath not, from him shall be taken away even that which he hath."

The sincere and humble Christian who studies the word of God diligently, and truly seeks to do his will; who keeps his heart with watchfulness, living in fervent prayer, not as a formal duty, but as the spirit of that strength by which he presses forward in the christian race, and contends with his enemies in the christian conflict; who remembers moreover th

religion includes and requires the diligent performance of every worldly duty, and the active display of every labour of charity; he shall enjoy the blessing of the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation. His light shall shine brighter and brighter, and his peace shall abound. When he reads the Bible, he sees a harmony, a richness of meaning, a force and clearness of application, by which he continually derives from it new treasures of heavenly wisdom. In his devotions, whether in the church or the closet, he feels his very heart drawn out with a glow and depth of affection, and confesses how good it is to be here! Strengthened in everything he must do or suffer with a power not his own, he derives confidence from that full conviction of his utter helplessness in which he casts himself entirely upon God; for he knows that the eternal God is his refuge, and underneath him are the everlasting arms. Thus growing in grace, he advances from the first quickening of spiritual life, to the blade, the ear, the full corn in the ear; till, being fully ripe for heaven, the great Husbandman puts forth his sickle, and gathers him in.

But, if the Christian become negligent, sinking his devotion to mere form, and his duties to the level of worldly decency,—especially if he allow himself in the practice of any sin, and turn away his eyes from his own heart, because he will not see what conscience would oblige him to condemn,—he shall feel the evil of his way. God will leave him to himself, to the end that, losing the happiness he once enjoyed in religion, and restless and miserable in his sin, he may know the bitterness of his bondage. Then, if he turn with godly sorrow and humble faith, he shall be comforted with God's help again. But if he refuse correction, God will at length cast him off for ever, and so he will become "hardened through the deceitfulness of sin," or perhaps rest in the complacency of self-righteousness. Still he may profess religion, and join in the services and privileges of the Church; but in the harvest he shall be separated as tares from the wheat, and cast into the fire.

In the Lessons for this day, we have the picture of a fallen, but repenting Church. The prophet declares to the Jews, as conscience may speak to our own hearts, why God had withdrawn his saving help, and shut his ear to their prayers. They had chosen their own ways. They had trusted in their own works. They had made them crooked paths, and separated themselves from God by their iniquities; lix. 1—8. They listen to the warning, and return to God, worthily lamenting their sins, and acknowledging their wretchedness; v. 9—15; and so receive of Him, the God of all grace, perfect remission and forgiveness through Jesus Christ; v. 15—21. The prophecy is for times yet to come, when God will be glorified in the redemption of Israel; as appears both from the prophecy itself, and the application of it, Heb. viii. 8—13; but its practical use for ourselves is not the less. So in the Evening Lesson, the Jews lament their captivity, and the desolation of all they once delighted in; as a fallen Christian, made sensible of his sins through punishment, owns them with deep contrition; and mourning his bondage, and the loss of all his former joys, pours out his misery to God: and as the Jews called to mind their deliverance from Egypt, as a plea and a ground of hope in their worst calamities, he pleads what Christ hath done for him; and so renouncing all merits of his own, he casts himself, with all his wretchedness and all his sins, upon the mercy of his heavenly Father.

All who thus come to God with penitence and humble trust, will surely be received: continuing faithful, they will be kept continually in his true religion; and leaning only upon the hope of his heavenly grace, will evermore be defended by his mighty power. Only let them remember that the true religion which Christians, "as the elect of God, holy, and beloved," are required to follow after, is a religion of duties as well as doctrine; of practice, as well as praise; of charity, as well as truth. Thus it is described in the epistle. For those who are Christians only in name, who have flourished in God's church, and mingled with his people, among them, but not of them, their final and awful fate is declared in the gospel by him, who will himself, in the last day, pronounce their sentence. "In the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them."

SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY.

Christ coming to Judgment; the hope of the Redeemed at his coming, and their present duty.

Morning Lesson . .	Isaiah lxv.
Evening Lesson . .	Isaiah lxvi.
Epistle	1 John iii. 1—8.
Gospel	St. Matt. xxiv. 23—31.

The last service formerly ended the Epiphany; for when there was a sixth Sunday, the services for the fifth were repeated. But at the last revision of the Liturgy, in 1662, a service was appointed for this day also, and that with great propriety; for it seems required to complete the developement of our Lord's offices and glory, by explaining and enforcing more fully the awful subject which the former Sunday alludes to only indirectly.

The portion appointed for the gospel is that in which our Lord describes the signs of his coming; in the primary sense of his words, to the judgment of Jerusalem; in their more important sense and application, to the judgment of the world. The Lessons foretell the same events. In the judgment of Jerusalem, a type of that at the last day, God executes in full severity his long-delayed vengeance upon the rebellious and wicked Jews. He sums up their crimes, and pronounces sentence; that He will number them to the sword; and they shall all bow down to the slaughter, leaving their name for a curse; lxv. 1—15. He describes the enduring miseries they shall suffer, in contrast to the blessings reserved for his faithful people; v. 13, 14. Taking away the remembrance of former things, He brings in a new dispensation, figured by creating new heavens and a new earth; and appoints a new Jerusalem, even the Christian Church, which is founded, built up, and established with everlasting blessings in Christ; v. 16—25; Is. xi. 6—9. The Evening Lesson foretells the restoration of the Jews, a subject on which the prophets delight to dwell. The gathering of them out of all lands, and the raising them up to spiritual life, felicity, and glory, is used here, as in other parts of scripture; — Is. xxv. 8; and xxvi. 19; Ezek. xxxvii. 1—14; and Rom. xi. 14, as a type of the resurrection. The prophet then glances forward to the last judgment; when the hand of the Lord shall be known towards his servants, and his indignation towards his enemies; for He "will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire;" v. 14, 15. His people shall rejoice at his coming. Their bones shall flourish with new life, as an herb which had died from off the ground, springs up, and flourishes again from its roots; v. 14: they shall worship before Him with continual praises, and see his judgment upon the transgressors; whose "worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched;" v. 24.

To this great day we look forward with joyful hope. Christ "was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil, and make us the sons of God and heirs of eternal life." "Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear we shall be like him; for we shall see Him as He is;" 1 John iii. 2. "Like Him," we shall be holy, glorious, and happy; dwelling in light without darkness, and in love without alloy. The best earthly happiness we know is the interchange of affection, though many a pang must be felt for one another, much forbearance mutually exercised, and the union must end at last with bitter grief to the survivor; but in heaven we shall be united to the innumerable company of saints and angels, with a pure and perfect love, which shall endure, unchanged, undisturbed, to all eternity. Happy are we now, when God condescends to lift up the light of his countenance upon us; but there "we shall see Him as He is," and, endued with immortal powers to support the brightness of his glory, behold Him without a veil, continually, and for ever.

"Every one that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure;" the unattainable perfection of whose example requires unceasing efforts to approach it nearer. We advance in this progressive purification by rightly using the appointed means of grace, in the diligent study of God's word, the regular observance of private prayer, and the orderly attendance upon public worship and the sacraments; with due care, however, not to attend to these as a routine of formal service. In studying the Scriptures, we must

earnestly seek wisdom and strength; in prayer, cultivate a spirit of fervent devotion; in God's house, cherish an awful sense of his presence; and come to the holy communion with such a lively faith, that we may verily and indeed partake of the body and blood of Christ. We must examine ourselves continually, and watch always unto prayer; not offering up a languid petition, and then yielding to temptation; but praying fervently and earnestly, casting ourselves upon God in full assurance of faith in his promise, that He "will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able, but will, with the temptation, also make a way to escape." We must watch and strive perseveringly against our besetting sin, yet not think our task done, and our warfare ended, when we seem to have subdued it. As weeds spring up one after another, requiring unceasing care and labour from the husbandman, so will evil spring up in the heart, and soon overrun it, choaking the good seed, if we rest upon what we have done. He who believes himself to have attained, will soon learn his mistake. He who thinketh that he standeth, is seldom far from a fall. Surrounded with snares in the world, and enemies whose strength and cunning are equalled by their vigilance and malice, while our own hearts are prone to betray us, foes without, traitors within, rest is not for us. Nor must we only guard against things evil in their nature, but also against excess in things lawful, seeking to attain to a consistent character by controlling our tempers, regulating our affections, and so reconciling our various duties, both worldly and spiritual, that we may have a conscience void of offence toward God and man, and adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things. Nor is it enough to resist evil: we must also follow after the good, redeeming the time, improving our talents, confirming right habits, strengthening every grace, giving diligence to add virtue to virtue, being faithful to all the duties of this life, while rejoicing in hope of heaven, and overflowing with unfeigned benevolence to man, the fruit and evidence of the ardent love we bear to our heavenly Father: whose help strengthens us in all the conflict; whose blessing comforts us in all our trials; in whom, as sons and heirs of eternal life, we rejoice in hope, that when our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ shall appear again with power and great glory, we shall rise to meet him with joy, and be happy for ever and ever.

PSALMS AND HYMNS

WRITTEN TO ILLUSTRATE THE SERVICES OF THE CHURCH.

VI.

GOD'S INFINITE MAJESTY.

THEE I'll extol, O God, my King,
Thine endless praise proclaim;
To Thee my daily tribute bring,
And ever bless thy name.

For Thou art great, supremely great,
And highly to be prais'd;
Thy majesty, with boundless height,
Above our thought is rais'd.

Ages to ages shall proclaim
Thy deeds of truth and might;
And men shall praise thy glorious name,
And in thy love delight.

Thine is an everlasting throne,
And thy dominion sure;
The saints shall make thy glories known,
And let the earth adore!

Psalm CXLV, (1st Part) *altered from the New Version.*

VII.

GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY.

MAKER of all things, mighty Lord!
We own thy pow'r divine;
The winds and waves obey thy word,
For all their strength is thine.

Wide as the wintry tempests sweep,
They work thy sov'reign will;
Thy voice is heard upon the Deep,
And all its waves are still.

When dangers threat in ev'ry form,
And death itself is near;
O God! amidst the raging storm,
We're safe beneath thy care.

With trembling hope, on Thee we stay,
To rescue from the grave:
Thou, whom the elements obey,
Art ever near to save.

First two Stanzas altered from Doddridge.

CHURCH AND KING.

"FEAR GOD—HONOUR THE KING."

No. IV. FEBRUARY 1, 1837.

THE CHURCH AND DISSENT,

CONSIDERED IN THEIR PRACTICAL INFLUENCE.

CHAPTER III.

(Continued.)

But it is time to trace the overthrow of that system of corruption which the Whigs had blended with all the machinery of the State. The first check to its demoralizing influence was established by the personal character of George III., and the high standard of morals which, by his example and authority, and in concert with the queen, he maintained at court. The death-blow to its political influence was given by Mr. Pitt. With the example of his illustrious father, with unrivalled talents, and unsullied integrity, if ever there was an individual specially appointed to unite, save, and exalt a nation, Pitt was the man. Even his youth, when called to the highest offices in the State, was greatly in his favour. The purity of a noble mind could hardly have escaped contamination, if he had been compelled to thread the foul mazes of intrigue and corruption, in working his way upward through subordinate offices. He succeeded to power when the Country was all but ruined. Abroad, his predecessors had disgraced her arms, and lost her colonies. At home, they had made the government so contemptible, that the most notorious scoundrel in the nation was able to defy them and triumph, though they exerted all the power of the State, and stretched that power to illegal tyranny, to crush him.

The circumstances under which Mr. Pitt succeeded to office were well calculated to establish him at once in the full confidence of his sovereign and the Country. Two parties, who had previously denounced one another, finding themselves individually too weak to maintain themselves in place, coalesced, and having seized upon the Government by their joint majority in the House of Commons, attempted to confirm their power by the extent of patronage they proceeded to create. In rescuing the king and the nation from the thraldom of this faction, Mr. Pitt displayed a judgment and firmness, which gave a just presage of his future career.

He failed in his attempts to make himself independent of party influence, by obtaining a House of Commons which should truly represent the Country. But he gradually destroyed the worst features of the former system, by compelling the servants of the Government—who, having received their offices in payment for political services, used them accordingly,—to feel their responsibility, and to do their duty. To him belongs the praise of having given power to public opinion, and established it on the foundation of public virtue. His proud integrity, and that ardent love of his Country which absorbed every other feeling, left him no temptation to pursue his great objects by any but the most honorable means.

The principles he maintained against the revolutionary Whigs and Destructives of his

day, and which we are once more called to defend, might well exalt the loftiest, and give vigour to the strongest mind. They include all that is truly excellent in politics, whether connected with duty, or character. The true Conservative is one, who, faithful to God and his Country, seeks "to do his duty in that state of life to which it has pleased God to call him." Regarding the institutions of his Country as designed, not for the aggrandizement of a party, but for the protection and benefit of all, he exults in the blessings they have secured for his native land, and guards them as a sacred trust for posterity. Anxious to remove any blot which may disfigure them, and to promote whatever may render them more effective for the public good, he requires proof that the proposed change is desirable, practicable, and safe. He condemns experimental legislation, which risks substantial blessings for shadows. He refuses to exchange practical systems for untried theories. He will not purchase real advantage at the cost of injustice. Conscience, as well as judgment, teaches him, that however duty and interest may seem to clash, yet that, whether in private, or public, or national concerns, integrity is the true and only path to safety, honour, and success. He knows his rights as a member of a free State, and firmly maintains them. He knows his duty as a subject, and performs it cheerfully. He regards the poor and helpless, not as burdens upon the land, who have scarcely the right to live, except as they minister to the pride and convenience of the rich, but as a sacred charge to be especially protected, and cherished. He has no idea of politics apart from morals; of morals, not founded upon religion; of religion, not derived from Revelation. Conservative principles, in short, comprehend every duty to our neighbour, our Country, and our King, all with reference to God, as our supreme Ruler and Judge.

Are we taunted with the question, How many Conservatives live up to this high standard? Grant that none do. A standard of principle and duty ought, like religion, to be perfect. As such, the best would fail to reach it in all things; but the excellence of the principle is not impaired by the imperfection of its followers, upon whom it still operates with a purifying and elevating power.

With those who are Conservatives only to defend abuses which they have an interest in preserving, we disclaim all community of feeling. They are Destructives, and in the worst sense:—destructives in effect, by corrupting and tainting where they devour and burrow; destructives in principle, for selfishness is their guiding motive; which, as it makes them anxious to preserve, would equally prompt them to pull down, if the change should be to their advantage. They who are not wedded to their principles, but accommodate them to the interest of the moment, are only political prostitutes. Such we have seen; who, after having gone into keeping with every successive minister, through all changes and extremes of opinion, came upon the town; where, gradually forsaken as they faded from exposures and excesses, they sunk at last to solicit the lowest populace, at the bidding of the bully of the establishment, at once protector and tyrant of the unhappy creatures by whose shame he was supported.

The French Revolution was a test of the great principle which divides the Church from Dissent; the question, whether the authority of rulers is ordained by God, or derived from the people. As such, it was hailed by Dissenters, who would gladly have extended its blessings to their own Country. The results of that great experiment are a terrible commentary on the pretended sovereignty of the people. It is vain to describe the atrocities which all men *now* shudder at, to the character of those who directed them.* The principle

* Good "citizens" and "patriots" think little of blood when shed in the cause of "liberty." While the guillotine was still reeking with the slaughters of the "reign of terror," a gentleman, since dead, and whose name I suppress, because he afterwards gained an honourable reputation, published a volume, which he entitled, "Songs from the Rock, to hail the approaching day, sacred to light, liberty, and peace." Among similar articles, which I cannot quote, as I have not seen the book for many years, is one which begins thus:—

"From the vine-covered hills and gay regions of France,
See the day-star of liberty rise:
Through clouds of detraction unwearied advance,
And hold its bright course through the skies.
An effulgence so mild, with a lustre so bright,
All Europe with wonder surveys;

must be bad which could raise such villains to supreme power; and although Atheism aggravated the horrors in France, it may be remembered that the leaders of the Great Rebellion in England scrupled little at a useful murder.

Churchmen denounced the Revolution from the first, because they condemned the principle; and the result proves that they were right. When traitors would have taught England to follow the example of France, and even organized their conspiracies according to the forms and names of the rebel government there, it was by church principles that the Country was saved. With "Church and King" for their watchword, and to maintain all that it includes; encouraged by the firmness of a sovereign, whom they justly loved as their father; and inspired by the energy of a minister, who deserved and received their full confidence, the people put down the factious, and saved the Country.

The war of the Revolution became the great means of renovating and exalting the national character, not for its glorious result, though this is the brightest page in our history, but for the principles upon which it was fought. It was a determined struggle against every thing which a good man should detest, and in defence of every thing he should cherish; and so protracted was the war, that a whole generation grew up under its influence. Through this long series of eventful years, a full sense of the most awful danger was combined with that lofty resolution, which is prepared for every extremity rather than submission; and that holy confidence, which commits its cause to God, and fearlessly does its duty. With this feeling, the most truly ennobling that man can cherish, the nation met her difficulties, and at last achieved her triumph.

The dangers of the Country combined all parties against the common enemy, till every difference seemed to be forgotten, and churchmen united generally with dissenters, even for religious objects. Those who felt the inconsistency, and foretold the consequences of these unions, were condemned, even by their own friends, as narrow-minded bigots. Thus Dissent became exalted by the direct sanction, and almost equality, conferred upon it; while Church principles, sunk to obtain the union, were at last scarcely remembered, except as the exploded prejudices of a less enlightened age. It became fashionable to express the utmost deference for Dissent, until churchmen attended and supported the Church, not as an institution of Divine authority, but merely as the sect which they preferred; which, in fact, is to support it upon dissenting principles.

The general and severe distress which immediately followed the peace, and which was so dreadfully aggravated by the total failure of the harvest in 1816, called forth a very strong democratic party; and public opinion, which had acquired invincible force through the war, gradually gave that party its support. For the abuses established by the Whigs through the last century, too long and intimately blended with the rights of property to be removed without great risk of disturbing the whole, yet to be excused only by necessity, enabled men of little talent, and no character, to gain credit with the nation as professed reformers; and placed the Government and its friends in the false position of maintaining what could not be justified. Nor could the unceasing efforts of ministers to lighten the public burdens, and to effect various practical improvements, check this feeling. The Church, the true bulwark against the democratic principle, became more and more obnoxious as this principle gained ground. Dissenters in their publications, and still more in private, did not cease to brand her with luxury, indolence, corruption, and irreligion. The town popula-

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And from deserts of darkness, and dungeons of night,
Contends for a share in the blaze.

"Let Burke, like a bat, from its splendour retire,
A splendour too strong for his eyes," &c.

But though the patriots of France might build pyramids with the heads of aristocrats, as high as those of Egypt, without disturbing his complacency, he felt due horror when blood was shed for such an unworthy object as defending his own King and Country. Thus he speaks of the victory of the first of June.

"Deluded people! shall your *gracious* King,
Still murder those he should protect and save?
Enjoy your blessing!"

it was a triumph to be almost wondered at wherever they returned a member. But now, the second class is for the most part merged in the first; the feelings of the third have undergone a great, and still progressive change; and the time seems fast approaching when the fourth alone will be destructive. Nor will the conservative movement stop here; for the various sects which compose this class have distinct and hostile interests, and when they can no longer attack the Church, they will worry and destroy one another.*

If the Conservatives were strong at the election, the circumstances of Sir Robert Peel's administration greatly increased their power. The noble attitude he maintained, and the wonderful ability he displayed; the wisdom and energy manifested in every department of his government; and the burst of enthusiastic admiration which cheered his retirement from office, taught them the strength of their position, and gave them union and confidence. The conduct of his opponents afforded the shadow to throw out all into the brightest relief, by proceedings, for which factious is a mild epithet; and a coalition so shameful, that it was not deemed possible until it actually occurred.

The necessity for his retirement from office has been deeply regretted. It would have been a calamity indeed if a small majority in his favour had made it his duty to remain. It was enough at that time to expel a radical House of Commons, and to bring the strength of the Conservatives into action; to place the interests of the Church in the hands of a proper commission; to maintain himself with honour; to retire with dignity; and to make it impossible for the Destructives to come into place, except by utter sacrifice of character. With a bare majority to carry on his government, he would too probably have been driven to conciliate a powerful opposition, by conceding so much more than justice could have claimed, as to leave not even the pretext for a real grievance: a policy which would weaken the union of the Conservatives, and certainly would never conciliate the Destructives. For the papist will never want a grievance while there is a protestant in Ireland; the dissenter, while there is a Church establishment; the democrat, while there is a Government to control him. To be popular with these, a Government must be too feeble and contemptible to resist them. A conservative administration would be a bar to their views, and whatever it might concede, like the Catholic Relief Bill, would be accepted without gratitude, and used as a hostile engine. It will therefore be premature, until it can firmly enforce the right, and refuse the wrong; resting upon the virtue, intelligence, and strength of the nation, and disregarding all party clamour. Had the Conservatives remained in office last year, a strong destructive opposition in the House of Commons would have given much of its own character to the measures of the Government. The Destructives, therefore, would have had the real power. Now, the power is with the Conservatives; while the others have gained only the criminal's distinction, a dishonoured elevation.

Supposing the Conservatives to have remained in office, and their measures directed with the most consummate wisdom, they could not have done half so much to establish their principles as the present ministers have been doing for them. Our great object is to unite all good men, of every name, in support of right principles. Who shall be minister, is, for the present, a secondary question. The attempt of 1835 to inflame the Country against the House of Lords, in reality, to establish a Republic, with popish ascendancy, had an excellent effect. Many a man has deservedly suffered as a traitor for crimes less wicked in the intention, and immeasurably less fatal in the tendency; but we may well forgive the wickedness of this attempt, in consideration of its surpassing folly. It offered something for every correct feeling to revolt at. The lover of the Constitution

* About two years since, a party of gentlemen, dissenters, undertook a kind of religious survey of 203 towns and villages. They found in them the following 17 sects:—

Presbyterians,	Six different sects of seceders from Methodism,
Independents,	Antinomians,
Baptists,	Moravians,
General Baptists,	Quakers,
Scotch Baptists,	Swedenborgians,
Wesleyans,	Papists.

(*Congregational Magazine*, 1834, *Supplement.*)

was roused by the attempt to subvert it. Every English and Protestant feeling was indignant that the agent of the popish priests of Ireland should dare attempt to make England subservient to their views. All who regard the decencies of conduct and language were disgusted even to loathing, when the scurrilities of the ruffian were applied to the most august assembly in the world. Here we saw the principles of the ministry embodied in a living form, open to all observation, and not to be misunderstood by the meanest capacity.

Their overthrow seemed at hand, when the result of the Municipal elections led the friends of the strongest in the House of Commons once more to create a ministerial majority. But the appearance of strength shewn in these elections is altogether delusive; and the Municipal Reform will be found the most effective conservative engine which has yet been brought into play.

Remembering that another and humbler class of voters was created by this measure, who would naturally be inclined to exercise their new power on behalf of those who conferred it; that the towns were so divided under the advice of those who possessed local information as to give every possible advantage to the one party; and that the old corporations, when exclusive, were generally unpopular; it would indeed be surprising had the results been other than they are. But there is nothing in these results to shew that the constituencies have become more liberal; while there is much that is calculated to make them more conservative.

The conservative and the liberal leaders in towns are very different characters. The former are chiefly men, who study to be quiet, and to mind their own business, and to do their duty in that state of life to which it has pleased God to call them; desiring to live in peace with their neighbours, and coveting no distinction beyond that which properly belongs to their talents, character, and station. Such men engage in party contests with great reluctance; in fact, they shrink from contending with low opponents for any personal object; and hence the apparent apathy so often charged upon them as a fault. Conservatism is not in itself a party feeling, but a general principle of duty. The liberal leader, on the other hand, is usually a bustling busy-body, who derives his chief consequence from his position with his party. Such men are agitators of necessity, because in quiet times they sink to their level. This constant activity gave them a great advantage over the Conservatives, for it increased their party, and kept it always organized and ready; and the prominent members of dissenting Meetings, deacons, and others, if not sufficiently respectable to become leaders themselves, were valuable auxiliaries, because they know, and can influence their flocks.

But now, the Conservatives will be compelled, by the inconvenience and discredit which arise from the appointment of unfit persons to corporate office, to unite, and exert themselves. The elections are repeated every year; and the results of them are seen and felt every day. The appointment of the magistracy also involves a very serious question. It is not a small grievance, that persons living in a corporate town shall be deprived of the judgment of the county magistrates, men of leisure, education, and independence, and compelled to place their interests at the mercy of a man, who cannot do justice without offending a business connexion, or a political partizan. The facts proved, and admitted in Parliament, of the scandalous extent to which the seat of justice has been prostituted to party purposes, were sufficiently disgraceful in principle; but deep and permanent will be the indignation of those who practically feel the consequences.

The struggle between the Conservatives and Destructives is now carried into the towns, the last holds of democracy in England; and there, as long as it continues, the two parties will stand entirely, and continually distinct. This alone gives the Conservatives all the advantages of their station and character; for it need not be remarked that they everywhere include the vast majority of the higher classes. Independent of the direct influence of property and station, there is a natural feeling, and in none so strong as in the lower classes, to be governed by the most respectable; not only because those who must obey estimate their credit by that of their leaders, but also, because the poor find themselves treated with far more consideration

and kindness by gentlemen, than by persons but little removed from their own station. Equally strong and general is the disposition to regard with contempt all who thrust themselves into office, to the exclusion of others manifestly better qualified. Strong party excitement may warp the judgment of the people for a time, but they will soon attach themselves to their natural leaders; and then, the present performers in the Municipal Farce of "High Life below Stairs" must resign their titles and their importance.

Nor let it be overlooked, for it involves a most important advantage, that as long as party spirit prevails,—and when it ceases to prevail, liberalism will be at an end, — the most reckless and violent of the party always determine the character and conduct of the whole. It is a happy condition of our nature, that evil, and error, have a constant progressive tendency, till they destroy themselves by their own excess. "Evil men and seducers will wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived." Many of the new corporations have already made themselves laughing-stocks to the Country; and doubtless very many more are not less contemptible in the eyes of their neighbours, though saved by insignificance from general ridicule. The inevitable tendency of their follies is to convert moderate Liberals into decided Conservatives. Meantime, we may quietly look on. In the State, the Destructives can do nothing but by permission. The result of their late attempt to play the bully, and the utter failure of all their efforts to stir up even the lowest of the low to back them, would have taught the Lords,—if, indeed, it could be thought that they who were firm through the hurricane would shrink at a passing gust, —how safely they may exercise with the most perfect independence all their high powers, as the second estate of the realm. In towns, they will soon sink to their level, if they are quiet; if troublesome and mischievous, the people have their remedy; and when the towns generally elect conservative councillors, we may be sure that a general election would send very few English Liberals to Parliament.

While the Conservative cause is thus steadily advancing, the present ministers may safely remain in office as long as they can. We have found them, and they still remain, our most useful allies. Had they, indeed, been practical men, talented, energetic, and independent, the consequences might have been serious. Measures previously well considered, and then carried steadily through Parliament, would enable them to command confidence from their supporters, and respect from all their opponents; while they would keep back, and silence those followers, who now, checked by no superiority in their official leaders, occupy the time, and sink the character of the House. But, ignorant as they are of business, intellectually and morally feeble, and never apparently in earnest, except upon a party measure which may prolong their official existence, had they been as independent, as they are notoriously, and evidently the reverse, they could not take that high ground which English ministers ought to occupy. They act, as if it were their object to satisfy their friends, by proposing most ample measures of relief; yet to husband the alleged grievances, by offering that relief in a form too loose, or too extreme, to be adopted. Thus, keeping back hurtful measures, and at the same time, raising the credit of the Conservatives by the continual contrast they offer of their own incapacity, they are most effectually levelling the way for their opponents to return to power. The question of office is no longer between the present Ministry, and a more moderate, or more extreme section of the Movement. A more moderate, would not be supported; a more extreme, would not be endured. The sole choice now, is between a cabinet, despised by its own party, and suffered to exist only because it is that party's last hope, or a decidedly conservative Government.

Let them, therefore, cling to office as long as they can obtain a casting vote, and so compel the Conservatives to be active and united. Let them call forth and strengthen every honourable feeling, by offering republican levelling for the loyal to oppose; a persecuted Church for the orderly to maintain; Popish ascendancy for Protestants to resist, and the dictation of Irish beggary for Englishmen to spurn at. Let them sink lower, and yet lower, to seek and to court partizans,

still disgusting their more moderate friends, till they shall have united all that is respectable against them. Let them make their principles thoroughly hateful to the Country by the mischiefs they attempt, and thoroughly contemptible, by the ignorance and vacillation they display in supporting them. Let them remain blind to the effects of public feeling, as it sweeps past them in a strong and steady current, undermining the ground on which they stand; till, suddenly, the whole gives way, and all their power and hopes sink in a moment, and for ever.

What a change in public feeling since five short years! Then, it was almost rashness to avow conservative principles; now, we are surprised when we meet a man of education who disputes them. Then, and for time immemorial, young men were almost universally liberal; now, they are zealously conservative. Then, the Church seemed at the mercy of her enemies; now, they tremble to attack her. Then, the Church in Ireland, upon which, under God, we must chiefly rely to extirpate Popery, was ignorantly deemed an enormous sinecure; but the attempt to destroy her, that Popery might be established on her ruins, has displayed her true character, invested her with the glory of a Christian martyr, and covered her persecutors with confusion. Then, Popery offered itself as a lamb, and we were assured that all its recorded atrocities were the crimes of former ages; but as it felt its strength, it began to speak as a dragon, proving, by perjury in Parliament, and by persecution and blood in Ireland, that its character is unchanged, and unchangeable. Then, there was a confusion of parties, while large classes of the friends of the Constitution had objects, which the Destructives were willing to take in their way; now, the question is brought to one simple alternative, — the Protestant Church, or Popery; the English Constitution, or a Republic! a question, which allows no room for neutrality, compromise, or indecision. By our triumph we shall save the Country;—she must perish if we fail.

With a cause to defend, for which a man might be proud to stand or perish alone, we have a force to command success, and an enemy, from whom defeat would be shameful. With us are the property, intelligence, and character of the Country united, by a common principle, and with "Church and King" for our watchword. Against us is a motley alliance of parties without a principle in common—the Papist, who would maintain the despotism of the priest; the Dissenter, who contends for the tyranny of the people; the Infidel, who would scoff at both.

The full strength of our cause does not yet appear, for the great majority of our present opponents in England will, ere long, be with us. Their errors are of the understanding, not of the heart. Time is required to overcome long cherished, but misdirected feelings of attachment or prejudice; but when the judgment corrects itself, the feelings will surely though slowly follow. The conscientious dissenter, whose attachment to Dissent rests on a conviction of its purity, will disclaim it as it shews itself a mere engine of factious agitation. The honest radical, who loves his King, and glories in his Country, is already a conservative at heart. When these desert the faction which they now ignorantly follow, its leaders will be glad to shrink into obscurity, and England will be herself again.

The Church is now the battle-ground; nor could we desire a better. The signal deliverances she has experienced, and the blessings she has been the means of imparting to the nation, prove her to have been the object of God's favour in past days. We know that before He leaves an unfaithful Church to ruin, He suffers her to fill the measure of her guilt, and to vindicate the judgment that destroys her, by apostacy and corruption. But the Church of England, her enemies themselves being judges, was never more pure, more zealous, more efficient than now. Let them therefore pause, and consider well what they do; for if indeed God be on her side, what must be their fate who rise up against her!

Calmly reflecting on the events of the last five years, we shall find none whose benefits we should willingly relinquish. The designs, the very success of opponents; the exertion of friends; the weakness of rulers; the violence of the people; national calamities themselves, fire, and pestilence,—all have been over-ruled for good. Nor let that be deemed an accidental coincidence, which called upon the Country to commemorate the Reformation,

when Popery was making its fiercest effort for ascendancy: nor let us forget to bless God for a perhaps unprecedented succession of mild winters, and abundant harvests, which prevented political excitement from being aggravated by national suffering.

And now, what remains for us, assured of most triumphant success, but to take care that our conduct shall do honour to our victory! Let us, therefore, with a firm trust in God, do our duty, as men who are maintaining a cause which they know to be good, upon principles which they know to be right. Let us yield nothing from fear. Let us do nothing from resentment. Let us avoid all motives, and guard against all feelings, of narrow party; and act really as well as avowedly upon those high principles, which all good men will support, and only bad men can oppose.

THE CHURCH ESTABLISHED ON THE BIBLE.

SEPTUAGESIMA SUNDAY.

The Creation.—Man is required to serve his Maker zealously.

Morning Lesson . .	Genesis i.
Evening Lesson . .	Genesis ii.
Epistle	1 Cor. ix. 24—27.
Gospel	St. Matt. xx. 1—16.

The services from the First Sunday in Advent to the end of the Epiphany describe the coming of Christ, and the character and offices he bears. Another division of the yearly course begins on this day with the Creation, and traces in parallel the types, in the bondage, deliverance, and pilgrimage of the children of Israel, with their fulfilment, in our own redemption. We rightly introduce this course of subjects with a penitential collect, in which, humbly acknowledging our sins, and the justice of our punishment, we pray God, of his goodness, mercifully to deliver us, to the glory of his name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

When God had finished his work in Creation, He "saw everything that He had made, and behold, it was very good." All things were adapted to fulfil the appointed end of their being, and to shew forth his praise. How reasonable it is that the creatures should serve and glorify their Maker, needs not to be proved; and since God's claim is in proportion to the powers and dignity He hath conferred, peculiar obligations rest upon man. He was made in the image of God, the last and noblest of his works; and though infinite wisdom cannot hesitate, and all things are alike easy to Omnipotence, yet, to convey to our understandings a just idea of the superior importance of man, the Creator is said to have deliberated concerning him, and to have formed him with peculiar care, by successive acts, and more direct personal interference. All other living beings were brought forth at the word of God, by the waters, or by the earth; but of him, "God said, let us make man in our image, after our likeness." "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul." A partner for him was made out of his own body, by a distinct act of creation; and the earliest of God's laws declared the paramount and indissoluble obligation of the marriage covenant.

The parable contained in the gospel for the day teaches how cheerfully we should attend to the call of God, and work where He sends us. Nor should we presume to delay, because some of the labourers were called at the eleventh hour. They were idle because no man had hired them; and it appears, from the parable, that they obeyed the first call they received, and went immediately into the vineyard; like those who have long lived in darkness, but as soon as the word is brought to them, gladly receive, and faithfully keep it. In the evening, all receive payment; not, however, proportioned to the time they had wrought; for the Master, while he left to no man just cause of complaint, extended his bounty according to his own goodness. We are not hence to infer, that all men, as well they who have been devoted to God from childhood, and they who began to serve Him at the last hour, will be rewarded alike; but

that the reward, which is of God's free grace, will be given, as He knows our hearts, according to his own wisdom. They who were called early, if they serve indolently, may fall short of others who were called late, but work zealously; nay, they may become unfaithful, and so miss their reward entirely. "Many that are first shall be last, and the last first; for many are called, but few are chosen."

The service God requires is more than a mere profession of his name. It is to devote all our powers to Him,—to exert them with strenuous and unremitting efforts,—to restrain, or give up whatever would interfere with our duty. It is to mark the course He appoints, to fix our eye upon the crown, and strive unceasingly to attain it. As the competitors at the Isthmian games, strove to the uttermost for the prize which only one could win, none daring to pause or relax in the race, "so run," says the apostle, strive like them, "that ye may attain." "And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things." The combatants in these games renounced every indulgence; ease, luxury, comfort itself; they habitually endured hardship, heat and cold, labour, fatigue, and pain, and made their whole life a preparation, submitting to everything, and doing everything, that might nerve them for the conflict. And all this "for a corruptible crown,"—a poor fading garland of parsley, or wild olive. How do they shame those indolent Christians, who will scarcely make an effort for heaven itself!

Like these combatants, "we run, but not as uncertainly." *They* ran all, but one obtained the prize. *We* run in a race where every one, who rightly strives, shall succeed: but we must strive with a devotedness, a preparation, exertions like theirs; like them, also, in that we are never sure of the prize, and dare not pause, till we reach the goal.—We may begin well; we may run well; we may advance far in the race; yet, after all, if we relax, we are lost. St. Paul himself had laboured as an Apostle,—we know how zealously,—five-and-twenty years, when he wrote, "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection, lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away." We must, therefore, labour to the very close of the day;—we must strive to the very end of the course;—we must fight till the last enemy is overcome; and in heaven we shall receive an incorruptible crown of glory, and all our labours will end in a sabbath of everlasting rest.

SEXAGESIMA SUNDAY.

The Fall.—God's long-suffering and mercy; —his Ministers appointed to warn, teach, and reclaim sinners.

Morning Lesson . .	Genesis iii.
Evening Lesson . .	Genesis vi.
Epistle	2 Cor. xi. 19—31.
Gospel.	St. Luke viii. 4—15.

Man remained not long in his innocency. The history of his lamentable fall succeeds immediately to that of his creation. Only nine generations elapse, and one man alone is found righteous, amidst the universal corruption of the world.

The holiness and justice of God must be vindicated in the punishment of sin. The offending pair are driven out of Paradise. The guilty world is doomed to destruction. Yet, in judgment, God remembers mercy; which He displays in the mitigated circumstances of the original curse; in the respite for 120 years given to the antediluvian sinners; but especially, in the hope of redemption. The sentence passed at the Fall included the promise of a Saviour, the seed of the woman; a provision of justice against the Serpent, who should receive destruction through her he had so fatally deceived; and of mercy to the woman herself, whose reproach on account of the Fall God took away, by establishing in her the promise of life. Again, when the sentence of the Flood is pronounced, God renews to Noah his great covenant of salvation, which, in after ages, He again established with Abraham, and with David, and in the fulness of time accomplished in Jesus Christ.

The salvation brought through him to the fallen race of man is declared in God's word, and offered through his Ministers. In connexion with this subject, the services for the day afford many important lessons.

They teach us to hope in God's mercy, and to trust in his faithfulness. When all the

world, except one man, had rebelled against Him, God established his covenant with that one; and before He would execute judgment upon the guilty multitude, He gave them warning, and space for repentance, even a hundred and twenty years.

They forbid presumption. God is just, as well as merciful. His Spirit will not always strive with man; and as they who refused to hear Noah perished all of them in the Flood, so all who now despise salvation will perish in the judgment.—2 Peter ii. 4—9.

They shew that we must receive salvation in the way God appoints. It would have been a vain hope in the old sinners to escape the deluge by any devices of their own; it is just as vain for us to put our trust in anything we can do. Only by the power of God can we be defended in the day of adversity; only by his appointed means can we be saved. He hath provided an Ark, even Jesus Christ, in whom whosoever is found shall live; and He now sends forth his Ministers, as he sent Noah, to warn all men of the coming judgment, and to direct them to the sure and only refuge.

They forewarn Ministers how arduous and unthankful are their duties. Noah was a preacher of righteousness for 120 years, and we find not that any one attended to him. What hardships and sufferings, endured in the cause of Christ, does St. Paul enumerate in the epistle; and notwithstanding, the Corinthians, for whom he had so faithfully laboured, had listened to false teachers, who thwarted and slandered him. Even now, and at our own doors, the faithful Minister is tried with persecution, danger, and sufferings; and in the quietest times, the chief trial of St. Paul, in a degree, is sure to be his; "that which cometh upon me daily, the care to all the churches." How heavy must be the charge, when he so cares for every soul, that he can truly say, "Who is weak, and I am not weak; who is offended, and I burn not!" His life *must* be full of anxieties. Can he be at ease, while his flock are perishing around him? With souls committed to his charge, whom, if they are lost, he will condemn by his faithfulness, or in whom he will himself be condemned for his neglect, can he watch over them with continual solicitude and prayer, yet feel no pang when all his care is in vain? Can he sow the good seed, day by day, with many an anxious look upward for a blessing, yet care not how many wayside hearts never receive it; and in how many thorny or stony ones it springs up, only to be choaked, or wither? If, indeed, he seek only the praise of men, his task is not hard. He will be a faithful preacher in their eyes, while he declaims against all sins but their own; and if he commend himself to their taste, without disturbing their conscience, he is sure to be popular. But where then is the fruit of his labours! When his people praise him without being improved, he may well fear that he has been unfaithful to their souls, and to God!

Finally, the gospel explains why the word is so often ineffectual, even when faithfully administered. The fault is in the soil. The word is given to all, like seed sown in every part of the field. Who that hears, and may read the Bible, can deny this? The help of the Holy Spirit is imparted to all, as the rain descends, and the sun shines, over all the ground. But one, full of idle thoughts, hears without attending, and immediately forgets: the word falls like seed on a beaten path, which the birds carry away. Another attends, and would gladly be a religious character, were there no trials to endure, no opposition to be feared. A third, whose heart is given to the world, becomes a flourishing professor: the blade springs, the stalk rises, higher, perhaps, than in the fruitful field; but, as surely as thorns choak the wheat, so surely is a worldly spirit fatal to religion. Carelessness, — cowardice, — worldly-mindedness; — where these tempers prevail, no fruit will be found for heaven. Only one character is approved: "They which, in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience."

QUINQUAGESIMA SUNDAY.

God's covenant of mercy; the means whereby we obtain its blessings; and the spirit in which alone we may possess them.

Morning Lesson . .	Genesis ix. 1—19.
Evening Lesson . .	Genesis xii.
Epistle	1 Corinthians xiii.
Gospel	St. Luke xviii. 31—43.

The sentence at the Fall was connected with the promise of a Redeemer: the fate of

Sodom and Gomorrha, with the gift of Isaac, through whom that Redeemer should come: the destruction of Jerusalem, with the coming of Christ, and the preaching of his Gospel to all nations: and with the final judgment of the wicked, shall be the glorious and blessed resurrection of the righteous. Thus God connects his most awful judgments with the most signal displays of his mercy; that, both being presented together, we may neither despair at the one, nor presume upon the other.

Scarcely had the waters dried from off the ground, when God established a covenant of mercy with Noah, that He would no more bring a Flood upon the earth; and confirmed it by a perpetual sign, the Rainbow. This beautiful symbol of his mercy would seem to have a more extensive meaning than merely to be a pledge of this promise; for it is elsewhere represented as one of the chief glories of the eternal throne. Ezek. i. 26—28; and Rev. iv. 3. The prohibition of blood also, Gen. ix. 4., which was repeated with such severe penalties in the Levitical law, seems to have been enjoined chiefly with reference to the means of atonement. The evening lesson gives a more distinct pledge of a Redeemer, in God's covenant with Abraham, that in him should all families of the earth be blessed. It had been already foretold, and the prophets afterwards witnessed to the same truth, that this Saviour should triumphantly redeem the world, not without suffering to himself. The serpent, whose head he should crush, would bruise his heel. Accordingly, in the gospel for the day, ver. 31—34, when our Lord foretells his approaching sufferings and resurrection, he speaks of them as the accomplishment of "all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man."

The means whereby we obtain the blessings of God's covenant in Christ are shewn in the narrative contained in the latter part of the gospel:—earnest, persevering prayer, prompted by a due sense of our own calamity; and with assured faith in God's power and willingness to save. The blind man cried earnestly for mercy, appealed for it by a name which declared his faith in the promised Messiah, "Jesus, thou son of David," and was only the more earnest and persevering when it was attempted to discourage him. Like him, let us cry for help, till we obtain it; and when we receive the blessing, let us, like him, follow after Jesus, and glorify God; shewing forth his praise, "not only with our lips, but in our lives, by giving up ourselves to his service."

As we have received mercy, we are bound to shew it. Love is the very spirit of Christianity; love to the brethren, members with us of one body in Christ: love to all men!—by the sympathies of our common nature; by our reverence for God's image, in which they are formed; by the remembrance of God's great goodness to our own demerits; by their claims upon us, in that God created them, Christ died for them, the Holy Ghost strives with them; by our sense of the bitter pangs of eternal death, and the inconceivable blessedness of everlasting life; by a just consciousness how much we ourselves, even the best of us, need the forbearance and charity of our neighbours; by our own continual need of mercy, and our daily appeal to God to be merciful to us, as we shew mercy to others. Our own condition, and all our relations both to God and man, require from us the exercise of this most excellent virtue; which is so essential to the christian character, that all our doings without it are nothing worth, and whosoever liveth without it is counted dead before God. This being absent, no spiritual gifts, however eminent; no liberality, however profuse; no zeal for God, though it carry us even to martyrdom, will be effectual. Wanting this principle of love, we are unfaithful to the whole moral law. We love not God, if we love not our neighbour; for, saith the Apostle, "He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God, whom he hath not seen."

Upon such a point it is material that we do not deceive ourselves; and in the epistle we have a practical description, and test, by which we may try our hearts and conduct. True charity shews itself in long-suffering, and kindness; in lowliness of mind; in meekness, and forbearance; in gentleness, and self-denial. It rejoices in another's pr credit; it is slow to suspect, an believe evil; or, if the fact is t doubted, it hopes the most f struction, and is forward to ations. This is a dispos

opposed to the selfishness of our corrupt nature, that the most amiable will find that it costs a long and hard struggle to attain to it. St. Peter describes it as the last, and crowning grace of the Christian, 1 Peter i. 22. and 2 Peter i. 5—7.; and in other parts of Scripture, as Psalm xv. and cxii.; he whose conduct is governed by this principle is represented as a perfect man: not that charity in itself constitutes the whole of religion, but that it proves the presence of all the rest. When genuine, it always springs from love to God; and it exists in an eminent degree, only where Christian principles have been habitually and watchfully cultivated, and Christian duties consistently practised. He who has thus attained is indeed an ornament and a blessing to society. He carries in his bosom the spirit of heaven itself; a spirit which he shall carry with him to heaven: for when earthly knowledge and spiritual gifts shall end; when faith shall expire in fruition; and hope shall cease in the full attainment of all it waited for, this, the most excellent, as the most enduring of virtues, shall unite the whole glorious and blessed company of saints and angels for ever.

ASH WEDNESDAY.

National humiliation, and personal contrition.

For the Epistle . . Joel ii. 12—17.
Gospel . . . . . St. Matthew vi. 16—21.
Proper Psalms, the seven called Penitential:
Morning . . . . vi. xxxii. xxxviii.
Commination Service li
Evening . . . . cii. cxxx. cxliii.

In the three last sundays, we have learnt our duty, as creatures, to our Maker:—as sinners, to our Redeemer;—as heirs of the promise, to our merciful and faithful God, whose covenant of grace in Christ is the foundation of our hope, and the charter of our inheritance. But holiness is required to faithful obedience: the merits and sacrifice of our Redeemer will not avail us, unless we turn from our evil ways: nor shall we inherit the blessings of the covenant, if we do not fulfil its conditions. Therefore, that we may be effectually quickened, and made lively members of Christ's body, we must truly repent; forsaking sin, and working righteousness. And forasmuch as "all we, (though baptized and born again in Christ,) yet offend in many things, and if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us," therefore it is needful that we continually, yea daily, humble ourselves before God, with fervent prayer, that He will of his mercy forgive us all our sins, negligences, and ignorances; and endue us with the grace of his Holy Spirit, to amend our lives according to his holy word.

And whereas all experience teaches, that what is a duty for every day is very liable to be neglected, especially when it is contrary to our corrupt inclinations; and that a subject cannot be rightly understood, and properly felt, unless the whole mind for the time be given to it, it hath been the wisdom of the Church so to set forth in order all Christian doctrines and duties, that, while she calls her children to daily exercise in all things pertaining to a holy life, she sets before them at every season, one subject for especial meditation and practice; for which the preceding services may have prepared them, and whose accordance with the season itself may quicken their attention. In the Fast of Lent, which begins on this day, she requires every one to examine himself with peculiar care, and to humble himself before God with deeper penitence; making the direct services of religion more especially the business of every day, and denying himself in every indulgence which may dispose him to yield to temptation. Nor can a more proper season be appointed for such discipline, than when we are about to consider the important doctrines which we celebrate at Easter, and prepare ourselves, as the Church requires that we then do, worthily to receive the holy communion.

The observance of this Fast hath obtained from the earliest age of Christianity; indeed a similar practice existed among the Jews, who devoted forty days to exercises of fasting and penitence, before the solemn yearly expiation; when the High Priest went alone, not without blood, into the Holy of Holies; a type of our great High Priest, who, with his

own blood, once offered, expiated the sins of all his people.

The whole season of Lent comprehends forty-six days; from which, deducting the sundays, which are always observed as festivals of joy and thanksgiving, there remain forty for exercises of penitence and humiliation. If the duration of the fast were a thing indifferent, none can without sin offend against the order of the Church, by offering a wanton, and contumacious resistance to her appointment; and for which, in this matter, the examples of Moses, of Elijah, and of our Lord himself, who each fasted forty days, may well be received as her sufficient warrant.

Devout humiliation prevails in all the services for this day. The collect, which is directed to be used daily throughout the season, expresses the deepest contrition. The proper Psalms are the seven which are called the "penitential." The Commination is a service of peculiar solemnity. After a suitable preface, it declares, in the words of Scripture, God's judgment against the various classes of sinners; the justice of which the congregation acknowledge, by repeating after every denunciation, "Amen." A most forcible and pathetic exhortation follows, taken almost entirely out of Scripture; after which, the priest and the people humble themselves together in prayer before God.

The portion appointed for the epistle, and the gospel, are very appropriate, and important. They mark the distinction between the general and public, and the personal and private duties of religion, with the manner in which they should be respectively observed.

There are national sins, which call down national judgments; to avert which, the means which God hath prescribed are public humiliation and penitence by the collective people; who should implore mercy together, publicly, in God's house; and shew the sincerity of their contrition, as far as outward acts may, by abstaining from all idle indulgence and amusement. Thus we should observe the fast days, appointed from time to time by our rulers, to avert particular judgments; and, for the sake of ourselves and our Country, we ought never to neglect this yearly season. Well may we, as a Nation, humble ourselves before God, for our national sins have been very great. Distinguished above all other lands by national mercies, and Christian privileges, we have made the murderous and profligate abominations of Indian idolatry a source of revenue. We have allowed millions to grow up in the midst of us, without caring for their souls. Even now, the multitudes of poor in our large towns are not taught to know God, and have no place where they may worship Him. Our offence has itself been made the instrument of punishment; we have been corrected, but in measure; and it well becomes us now to humble ourselves, not only in words, and outward forms of contrition, but also by bringing forth fruits meet for repentance. Let us now consider well our past sin, and resolve, by God's help, which let us fervently implore, that all our brethren, now perishing around us, shall be taught to know Him.

But we have personal and private sins, which require humiliation and penitence. Our expressions of contrition for these, as the gospel teaches, are between our own hearts and God; and when we offer them, we should enter into our closet, and shut the door. All display is to be condemned here. It springs from a pharisaical temper, or will certainly create it. The right way to profess religion is to observe regularly all its public duties, and to prove our sincerity by consistent conduct; which conduct we shall be enabled to maintain, if we live in the continual exercise of private devotion.

As often as the present season returns, we should rouse ourselves to the careful and strict observance of both these duties. As God exhorts by his prophet Joel, we should meet together in his house, there, with undissembled and godly sorrow, to implore his mercy upon the Church and Nation, and upon ourselves as members of each; which duty we cannot omit, without being guilty either of sinful negligence, or presumptuous contumacy. At the same time, according to the injunction of our Lord in the gospel, we should seek for ourselves pardon, blessing,

growth in grace, by acts of fervent devotion and self-denial, offered in secret to Him who is in secret; which, if we faithfully do, we have the assurance of Christ himself, that our Father, who seeth in secret, will reward us openly.

PSALMS AND HYMNS

WRITTEN TO ILLUSTRATE THE SERVICES OF THE CHURCH.

VIII.

OBEDIENCE TO OUR MAKER.

O Thou, in earth and heaven ador'd,
In whom alone we live and move;
Creator! Father! mighty Lord
Of all below, and all above!

We own thy pow'r, by which we stand;
We bless thy love that crowns our days;
Preserv'd and strengthen'd by thy hand,
Oh let our lives declare thy praise.

Thus, gracious God, thy people bless,
And spread abroad thy righteous sway,
Till all mankind thy name confess,
Receive thy word, and keep thy way.

Exalt the sceptre of thy Son;
To him be all the kingdoms given;
And let thy will on earth be done,
As holy angels serve in heaven.

IX.

DEAD IN SIN.

Wake from the dead! new life begin;
Obey the call, ye dead in sin,
That now proclaims, 'Arise!'
Wake, ere with vain remorse ye rue
The yawning pit that waits for you,
The worm that never dies.

In vain their awful doom is told!
The ear is deaf, the heart is cold;
We speak the word in vain:
Bound in the strength of Death and Hell,
Can man the great Destroyer quell,
And break the captive's chain?

O Lord of Life! O strong to save!
Almighty Conqu'ror of the grave!
Now let thy power be known:
By thine appointed servants speak;
For, though the instrument is weak,
The word is still thine own.

X.

THE GOSPEL COVENANT.

Truths, which Prophets sought in vain,
Brightly in the Gospel shine;
Glorious hopes, which all may gain;
Lord, be every blessing mine!
Blessings, seal'd with Jesus' blood;
Life in him, and peace with God.

But, to share that blissful part,
I must well improve my hours;
Loving God with all my heart;
Serving Him with all my powers:
While to others just I prove,
Walking by the law of love.

Lord, my heart with strength inspire
Thus to keep thy perfect word:
Thou didst give the pure desire;
Thou wilt needful aid afford:
Help me to fulfil thy praise;
Guide, and bless me all my days.

XI.

FOR ASH WEDNESDAY.

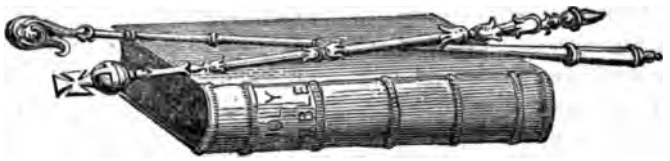
O God of love! to Thee our prayers arise;
Before thy Throne we humbly bend the knee:
A broken heart Thou, Lord, wilt not despise;
With broken, contrite hearts we come to Thee.

Defiled with sin, but trusting in thy grace,
For all who turn from wickedness shall live;
Vile as we are, we fall before thy face;
O hear our cry, receive us, and forgive!

All-seeing God! our hearts are known to Thee;
We cannot hide our folly and our shame;
We only urge the contrite sinner's plea,—
Have mercy, Lord, in Jesus' blessed name!

Through him we come; O spurn us not away!
Grant us thy grace, which, trembling, we implore!
Speak to our heart in words of peace, and say,
Thy guilt is pardon'd; go, and sin no more.

CHURCH AND KING.



"FEAR GOD—HONOUR THE KING."

No. V. and VI. MARCH 1, 1837.

THE CHURCH AND DISSENT,

CONSIDERED IN THEIR PRACTICAL INFLUENCE.

CHAPTER IV.

The Church and Dissent, their Influence on the Personal Character.

WHATEVER may exalt individual character is of the highest importance, both in a political, and a religious point of view;—a political; because the character of nations, societies, and families, depends upon that of individuals, as buildings upon their materials;—a religious; because God has given us a capacity for unlimited intellectual and moral improvement, which, if we neglect, we are false to our duty, and interest. The great object of our present existence is to become wiser, and better; and, using the term "wisdom" in its highest and true sense, the two are inseparable. Whatever debases the understanding tends to corrupt the heart: whatever exalts it, gives additional strength to virtue: for vice is essentially mean, and it must be an added safeguard, when the mind despises what the conscience condemns.

The means whereby we may improve ourselves, in addition to the due performance of our daily duties, are found in the habitual contemplation of greatness, as it exists in superior character—in great objects—and in extended periods of time. By the first, the mind is raised above the influence of low motives, and animated with a just desire to excel: by the second, it becomes elevated and expanded, through its natural tendency to comprehend that to which it strongly and habitually applies itself: the third frees it from the narrow interests of the passing moment, and enables it to form just, and enlarged views of truth, and duty. These means, to produce their full effect, must be so adapted to the nature, and identified with the interest of the individual, as to command his attention, and engage his affections.

Religion combines all these in the highest degree. Its interest begins with Time itself, and extends through Eternity: its objects are infinite: it offers the example, not only of the best and greatest men who have ever lived, but also of God himself in our nature, when He condescended for our redemption to manifest himself on earth: it appeals to every man's bosom by the highest obligations of duty, gratitude, and love; and by the strongest motives which hope and fear can supply. Thus it counteracts the influence, and frees us from the corruption of our fallen nature, which has made us prone to surrender ourselves to the dominion of sense, and to pursue hurtful and debasing objects.

Since, therefore, our character and interests, both for this, and the next world, are connected with our improvement as reasonable and accountable beings, we ought to take care that all our public institutions shall be such, as to counteract every downward tendency: and that all things connected with government, and with general, and religious

instruction, shall accord with the elevating influence of religion.

The first, and most obvious consideration, is the view to be taken of the dignity and authority of those, who are set on high as governors, both in civil, and spiritual things. As they have a direct relation to every man, in his public, and in many of his private duties, and are placed to be observed of all, the estimate taken of their office must greatly influence individual character, because it is practically identified with habitual thoughts and feelings.

The Church, and Dissent, take entirely opposite views of government, and obedience: it is, in fact, their first great difference, out of which all others proceed; the Church regarding government as of divine appointment, and obedience as an obligation of conscience;—Dissent contending that government derives its authority from the people, and that obedience rests upon public expediency.

This is not the place to reason on the truth of these opinions; but only to consider the effect they are calculated to produce on their respective followers. Thus reasoning, that must be allowed to be the more sublime idea, which not only invests the sovereign with every thing that is most glorious and exalted of earthly majesty and power, but sees also in him God's appointed representative on earth, by whom He chiefly executes his purposes towards the nation. We therefore honour and obey him as our ruler, and love him as our protector and father: and if we are so happy as to be blest with a king, like our good George III., who not only thus represents the divine authority in his office, but displays also God's moral image in his piety, we have the most exalted idea of greatness that the world can afford. The thoughts, and feelings, which the contemplation of such majesty is calculated to awaken in his faithful and affectionate subjects, are the most elevating, and pure, that we can possibly form of any thing on earth.

From this pinnacle of glory and greatness, down to the delegate of the sovereign people, is a descent indeed. It is idolatry, as contrasted with the true religion; an image of clay, set up by a besotted multitude, to be worshipped in their folly, and dashed down in their caprice. A dignity created by, and dependent upon themselves, cannot excite very elevated ideas; a principle which admits all the elements of party and faction, cannot be favorable to pure feelings.

But ours, it will be said, is a principle of slavery; theirs, of liberty! Let facts decide who is the slave and the oppressor, for the two characters are always in one. Who is a despot when in power, but the liberal? Who trample on the poor, but the champions of the Rights of Man? "I have known many of these noisy sticklers for liberty in my time," said Goldsmith, "but never one who was not in his heart and in his family a tyrant." Or, to appeal to present examples, who are *now* the slaves? they, who with feigned alacrity, and bitter reluctance, drag the triumphal car of the demagogue who reviled them; or the gentlemen of England, who scorn them with scorn unutterable for their subserviency? Who are the tyrants? they, who changed our great national charity, the Poor Laws, into an engine of grinding oppression; or the magistrates, who are deprived of their former power, because their known disposition to protect the poor marked them as unfit instruments to carry into effect its unfeeling enactments?*

* I had completed, with a view to publication, a small Treatise on the "Administration and Improvement of the Poor Laws;" when the Poor Law Commission was first appointed. I sent the MS. to the Commissioners, thinking it would be more useful in their hands, than if published as I at first intended: and it is printed in the Appendix to their Report. The leading principles there laid down for improving the law, were, the general enforcement of the workhouse system; and the establishment of a central authority, in connexion with the Government. I claim no credit for having indicated the principles upon which the new Poor Law is founded; for every man practically acquainted with the subject, must have come to the same conclusion: and I entirely protest against the details of the present system; for nothing can be more unlike the workhouses I had described, than its union gaols: or the central authority I had recommended, than the "Central Board."

The great evil of the old system was, that no man, whether magistrate or relieving officer, whatever his experience, could determine with certainty from his own inquiries and observation, whether the alleged

As the nations who cast off the knowledge and fear of God, sunk, notwithstanding their eminence in science, till they worshipped the vilest animals, and made deities of the most brutal vices, so they, who revolt at that authority which God has appointed to represent his own, prove the debasing influence of their principles by the character of their political

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distress was real or fictitious; and supposing it real, whether the applicant himself could not relieve it by due exertion. The knowledge that the idle and worthless continually succeeded in imposing upon the parish, created habitual suspicion in the minds of parish officers, from which the deserving poor suffered, by the undue harshness with which they were examined, and the inadequate relief they received. The bad effects were, extravagance, because numbers of the undeserving were successful claimants;—and cruelty, for the really necessitous were not relieved as they ought to be; to which should be added, the demoralizing influence of a system which encouraged idleness and fraud.

The only means by which to secure the parish against imposition, to avoid the necessity for harshness of language or manner to any applicant, and to afford due relief to the deserving poor, was to introduce a self-regulating system; founded upon the principle of giving adequate assistance to the really destitute, but in a form under which none but the really destitute would accept it.

The great essential to such a system is a workhouse, under proper regulations and authority; affording suitable comfort to the aged and helpless, due care and education for the young, and work for all who are able: in which every safe indulgence should be allowed; that is, all that is compatible with such discipline as may effectually repel the idle and the disorderly.

Parishes with a small population do not require a workhouse so large as to warrant the expense of a master or mistress. Such, therefore, must be united with one or more neighbouring parishes: but these unions should not be larger than is required to secure proper discipline. The quiet upon which the comfort of the aged so much depends, is scarcely to be obtained in a very large establishment: it is a serious evil to remove the poor to such a distance from their friends, as to deprive them of all those little attentions and presents they would receive if near them: and the strict unyielding discipline necessary to preserve order in a multitude, is incompatible with the discriminating indulgence which good character and good conduct are entitled to. These are all the earthly comforts which remain to the aged inmate of a workhouse, and it is cruel and wicked to inflict needless suffering upon the aged and poor.

In all our reasoning and legislating on the Poor Laws, it is to be borne in mind that they are a *charity*. Whatever approaches to cruelty is therefore inconsistent with their first principle. We are to enforce that strict discipline which repels the worthless, that we may be able the more freely to shew kindness to the deserving.

A properly regulated workhouse repels the idler, because he must there work; the disorderly, because he must submit to restraints: the vicious, because he is cut off from his indulgences: even the most deserving will avoid it as long as they can; because it implies a descent in the social scale, and a surrender of independence and free agency, of which none are more tenacious than the creditable poor. The full attainment of all these objects is quite compatible with kindness, comfort, and indulgence.

Thus, with respect to married couples, who in a properly regulated house will, with rare exceptions, be confined to the aged, it is true that a separate chamber could not be afforded to each; but nothing would be more easy than to separate, and enclose, the beds in a large room, like the cabins in a packet vessel; by which there would be no loss of space, decent seclusion would be afforded, and the feelings of the poor respected. But it seems that so strict is the order to separate all married couples, that a wife could not obtain permission to nurse her sick husband without express leave from the central board!! I would rather be the victim of such monstrous cruelty, than the poor law commissioner to inflict it. The creation of such a commission seems to accord with the process by which, in Lord Byron's "Deformed Transformed," the devil makes a man—

"His heart be this marble I tear from the rock."

The *rule* of relief undoubtedly should be that all permanent poor should be taken into the house: but to this there are exceptions. A new-made widow may properly be encouraged and assisted for a time, while she has a prospect of supporting herself by her own exertions. The mother of four or five children, whose various earnings united may support the whole, should receive such aid as would enable her, with their earnings, to secure for them a comfortable and united home. Other proper exceptions might be cited; and of all these, the magistrates acting for the district would be the best judges. The magistrates also, should be visitors to the workhouses, as to the county lunatic asylums; and the parish clergyman should direct the religious instruction of the inmates. When all paupers were relieved with money, the magistrates, indeed, would err continually by ordering relief to the unworthy; for the most experienced parish officers, without the test of a workhouse, would be continually deceived;

idols. Thus, with idolatry baser than that of Egypt, the slanderers of George III. bow down before a factious mendicant; and whig-radical Peers bring their homage and their offerings to one, whose avowed object is to trample their coronets in the dust.

The principles of government upon which a constitutional monarchy rests, are identical

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this power, therefore, could not safely be committed to them. But the object now is, to carry a *system* into effect, with order, and humanity; and to determine what cases of undoubted want, should, from peculiar circumstances, be exempted from it. For this, the magistrates are not only the best, but the only proper persons. It is an insult to the understanding of the public, to affirm that an independent gentleman of education and character, living on the spot, and well acquainted with all the circumstances connected with the place and the people, is incompetent to judge, of what an assistant commissioner may decide off-hand at a flying visit, or the commissioners at Somerset-place determine upon hearsay.

But the object of the Poor Laws is not merely to support those who must be permanently, and entirely pensioners upon the public, and who, with few exceptions, should be taken into the house, but also, to give temporary help to those who are suffering from temporary difficulties, thus enabling them to preserve their independence. When labourers, from no fault of their own, are out of work, and which must continually happen, from seasons, or stagnation of particular employments, it is monstrous to say that they shall starve, or go to prison: for the new workhouses are in fact prisons. They ought to be supplied with task work, by which they may earn from half to two-thirds of a week's wages, thus giving them time to look for better employment; which the low rate at which they are paid for what they do, and the scanty amount of the utmost earnings allowed by the parish, would make them anxious to obtain.

Why should labourers, with a large and helpless family beyond their power to support, be compelled to become paupers altogether; instead of being relieved of a part of their burden, by taking one or more into the house? Even economy dictates the latter plan, for nothing but extreme necessity will induce the poor thus to part with a child. Out of sixty children in a house which I visited daily for some years, I do not think there were at any time ten who were thus admitted, though scarcely a week passed in which relief was not offered in this form. Nearly all in the house were orphans, or illegitimate.

I remember a case where a man, his wife, and six children, who had long been almost entirely chargeable to the parish of Merthyr Tydvil, were found to have their settlement at Swansea, and were removed accordingly. One of the overseers of Merthyr accompanied them, partly to see how such a family would be provided for. The eldest child was old enough to work, and the second might liberate the mother, by taking charge of the two youngest. The man, therefore, was offered the parish work, until he could get better; he was told that he might send his third and fourth children into the house, and a trifle was given him for his present wants. In a day or two he found employment; he never sent his children, and never became chargeable again. Had they been all taken into the house at once, (and being strangers, with no other resource, they must have come in,) they would probably have remained there permanently, at an expense to the parish of 50*l.* a year.

A recent petition to parliament states a fact, which if it were not so authenticated, would be incredible—that a widow, who could support herself, but not her children, was actually sent to gaol because she refused to come into the workhouse with them. If anything could equal the wickedness and tyranny of such a step, it would be its impolicy. While the mother continued to support herself out of the house, there was a means of introducing her children, the girls to service, the boys to work, as independent poor, instead of parish apprentices; for as they grew old enough to do something for themselves, and to be useful to her, she would naturally take them out.

The plea offered for the New Poor Law is the saving it has effected. Part of this is deceptive, owing to the discontinuance of the former scandalous practice which prevailed in many places, of paying labourers from the poor-rates: but, undoubtedly, a very great saving will be the consequence of introducing the workhouse system generally, probably one-half, at least. But this will be the case where discipline is tempered with the utmost humanity. In Swansea, with a rental of less than 25,000*l.*, for a population of 14,000, the poor-rates were so low, that if the same proportion could be applied to the whole kingdom, they would be less than three millions a year. The poor were liberally relieved and kindly treated, indeed I do not recollect an applicant to have been addressed with harshness; but the order and discipline which repelled the impostor, allowed indulgence for the deserving poor. The "town" of Falmouth is very unfavourably situated. Municipally and parochially distinct from its outskirts, it contains the great majority of the poor, while all the rich live beyond its boundaries. Actually not one gentleman of independent

with those of the Church. In her we find that elevating influence, which arises from moral greatness, combined with official authority, and exalted by the sanction of a divine commission. United with society by personal connexions and official ministrations, the clergy yet form a distinct class, who are separated as the authorized ministers of God's

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property lives in it. Yet a workhouse system, orderly, and reasonably indulgent, has brought down the poor rates to a scale, which, for the whole kingdom, would little exceed three millions. Cruelty, therefore, is not necessary to economy. I will add that economy ought never to be pushed beyond the bounds of humanity. There is One who marks the groaning of the poor, and will judge the oppressor.

The Central Board is altogether anomalous and monstrous. A central power there should be, to receive and arrange the reports of all the parishes; to advise, guide, and support the local authorities, as the Home Secretary does the magistrates: and to recommend any change which the law may from time to time require. But the Central Board is an universal meddler, interfering directly with all details of management in all parishes, superseding all local authority, and exercising an arbitrary, absolute, and irresponsible despotism. A power beyond that of one of the principal Cabinet Ministers, affecting all the community, and despotic in its nature beyond a parallel, is exercised, without an individual in either House of Parliament being officially responsible.

The business of the Central Board properly belongs to the Home Department, and the Home Secretary himself should be expressly responsible for it; having an additional under-secretary, whose attention would be confined to this charge. A superior chief clerk, not going out, as a political character, with a change of Administration, would ensure the constant efficiency of the office.

One subject should not be passed over. The former bastardy laws were most objectionable: but the opposite extreme of wrong is not right. The wanton should bear her shame and its penalty; but is all redress to be denied to the victim of seduction? If a master make a profligate use of his influence, —if a lover take an unprincipled advantage of the affection of a confiding girl; ought the villain to escape, and his victim to be punished? To offer the remedy of an action in the Courts of law, is in most cases a mockery. Why not allow Magistrates at the petty sessions to try such cases, with a jury to assess damages, according to the circumstances of the case, a maximum being fixed for the costs and damages. A sufficient check would still remain upon the one sex; a proper check would be imposed upon the other; and a distinction made between her who is more criminal than unfortunate, and her who is more unfortunate than criminal. Now, both are confounded.

The administration of the New Poor Law is founded upon three utterly false principles:—That the Magistrates are not to be trusted; that the great majority of the poor become paupers through their own fault: and that the feelings of paupers are not to be considered, nor any general indulgence to be shewn to them. I speak not from inference; but from statements made expressly to myself by one of the principal officers of the Central Board.

I shall not insult the Magistrates, by supposing that they need any defence of mine. As to the voluntary pauperism of the poor, it is refuted by the very publication of the Commissioners. They state that labourers and their families do not consume any thing like the quantity of solid food, which is thought necessary for the inmates of workhouses and prisons. It is true; in fact, their wages will not afford it. Let any one attempt to form a diet table for a week for four persons, and he will find that, after he has brought it to the lowest amount, both in quantity and quality, which his humanity will allow, it is beyond the wages of the labourer; that is, after a proper allowance has been made for rent, clothes, and fuel. If, then, the poor must stint themselves in the best of times, what can they do when visited with calamities, deficient work, accident, sickness, death. To borrow from one of the most amiable and talented writers we possess:—

Traveller.

"'Tis idleness makes want,
And idle habits; if the man will go,
And spend his gettings at the ale-house fire,
Is it a wonder that there's want at home?

Woman.

"Ay, idleness! The rich man never fails
To find some reason why the poor deserve
Their miseries: is't idleness, I pray,
That brings the fever, and the ague fit?
Is't idleness that makes small wages fail
For growing wants?"

Southey's Minor Poems.

With respect to treating paupers with kindness, the examples of Swansea, and Falmouth, prove that the utmost economy is quite compatible with humanity. And if any are so hardened against their brethren as to think that human hearts may be trampled on, and human feelings sacrificed to political expediency, they are beyond the pale of argument. We reason only with men.

word, and set on high for an example. Let their calumniators affirm what they may, the fact is unquestionable, that all classes in society, not excepting the very highest, do look up to them with reverence.

Their influence, though it rests chiefly on their sacred office, is strengthened by many other circumstances. Their independence is secured by fixed endowments. Their dignities, to which every member is eligible, and of which the highest is next to royalty, ennoble the whole order; and are invaluable to the Country upon constitutional grounds, as affording almost the only means, by which superior talents and virtue may rise from obscurity to the peerage. None compare with them in learning. From them the Country derives its education, every thing at least which deserves that name. The most noble and solid works of literature, the glory of our language, are the fruit of their labours; and it is the high standard of learning which they require, and maintain, which has given to our Universities such a splendid reputation. Nor are these, be it observed, barren ornaments, which merely give importance to a privileged and exclusive order. They are acquired and used for the public good, giving to individuals their chief means of intellectual improvement, and both directly, and indirectly, exalting the character of the nation.

Distinguished for whatever may chiefly claim respect, their ministrations are accessible to the humblest individual; and that, not merely in towns, and populous places, but also, in the most remote, and desolate spots. In the thousands of parishes which the voluntary system would leave to barbarism; where it could neither effect an entrance, nor support itself if an entrance were given, the Church places clergymen, in no respect inferior to those, who minister in the most populous towns, and to the most refined congregations. Thus they are agents even of civilization; by the influence of themselves and their families, and the effect produced by the quiet and modest elegance of the parsonage. The poor look to them for counsel in difficulties, and comfort in affliction; and if there be a character more than another in which the clergy delight,—I speak from observation,—it is that of the poor man's friend. Among all classes, whatever is most delightful or affecting is connected with them, and our purest earthly affections are hallowed by their ministrations.

A body of men possessing so many just claims to respect, independent of that office which more than all exalts them, and everywhere so intimately connected with society, cannot but exercise a powerful influence. Indeed, if we trace the benefits derived from the Church, in addition to her direct spiritual ministrations, we shall find that there is little on which we value ourselves, for which we are not greatly indebted to her. But the blessings she imparts, like air, and light, and water, are common blessings, and are therefore received without a thought, as things of course.

The contrast between the conditions of the clergyman, and the dissenting minister, is so

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I shall be pardoned for quoting myself, when I close this article with the passage that ends my report to the Poor Law Commission.

"The poor deserve all the attention we can give them. They are grateful and respectful to their superiors, and most kind to one another. If treated with harshness, contempt, or neglect, they will resent it, and they have a right to do so; but let any one display an interest in their concerns, address them kindly, listen to them with patience, advise with judgment, assist with discrimination, and reprove with temper, and he will never have reason to complain. I have been brought into contact with thousands of them of all grades; from the respectable artizan, down to the imprisoned felon, and the wretched inmates of the lowest abodes of vice. I have never been treated with disrespect; and have far more frequently had reason to blush at the excess of their gratitude, than to reproach them with unthankfulness. Their kindness to one another in distress is most exemplary and affecting. When pleading for a neighbour, they will, indeed, urge the absence of all claim upon themselves, and their inability to afford assistance; but, after the aid they have been soliciting is either granted, or denied, they will cheerfully divide their morsel, and perform voluntarily, and gratuitously every service. Their faults are on the surface, and are often nothing more than that coarseness of manner which belongs to their station; but whoever will observe them closely, will be compelled to admire their general character; and will feel it an enviable privilege to relieve distresses in which it is impossible not to sympathize, and to place them generally in a situation which shall afford encouragement and scope for their virtues."

great, that it is truly painful to allude to the latter, even in opposing the system to which he belongs. To be dependent, and known to be so; to be uncertain from year to year, even of the pittance he obtains; to be obliged to conciliate his hundred masters, and to lead them wherever they choose to go, is the fate of the greater number; who may with much reason envy the condition of a domestic servant; and of whom their most respectable friends habitually speak in terms of pity. There is nothing elevating here.

It will not be disputed that the influence of ecclesiastical buildings on the public mind is very considerable. No palace may compare with the simple grandeur of a cathedral; and the most humble parish church makes the surrounding peasantry familiar with an object, far superior to any other with which they are acquainted. But considerations of taste, arising from its superiority as a work of art, form the least part of its influence; the charm is in the crowd of moral associations. The villagers have a feeling of property in their own parish church; nor could a greater outrage be offered to their feelings than any attempt to desecrate or deface it. Venerable for extreme antiquity, and firm as the hills around it, it stands, as a part of their native land, and to endure with the Country to all ages. Every feeling which the building itself may awaken is exalted by the knowledge, that it is but an unit, in one vast, and all-pervading establishment; a star, in a whole firmament of heavenly lights. It appeals to all the affections, by motives which penetrate the inmost heart; bringing before the worshipper his birth, his domestic happiness and duty, the memory of departed friends, his own death. Within, he sees the font at which he was baptized, and the altar where he knelt at his marriage. Around it, he contemplates the graves of his friends, and the spot which one day will probably be his own. These are charms which speak to every bosom, and from whose influence even the enemies of the Church cannot quite escape. Every one feels that a picture of English scenery is incomplete, without the old grey tower, or the village spire, upon which the eye instinctively rests, as the loveliest feature of the landscape; and who can hear the distant bells, in the cheerfulness of a sabbath morning, or the stillness of a summer's evening, without feeling their soothing power enter his very soul?

But the Meeting, a lonely institution, struggling for existence, and as a building, inferior, for the most part, to the ordinary dwelling-houses around it, what charm has it to offer? In its construction, cheapness must be consulted in every thing, because it is almost always built with borrowed money; and hence the flimsy, bald, and comfortless appearance it usually presents. Of interesting associations I know none, unless it be the debt, which there are no means of paying, except by starving the minister, or sending him to beg through the country; and perhaps, the recollection of disputes and quarrels, of which it has been the occasion — associations these, which its friends would gladly forget.

Whoever would be truly great, must be unaffectedly humble. A just estimate of himself, and a generous admiration of superior excellence, are necessary to create that noble emulation, which at once raises the person above all that is mean, and exalts him more and more towards that which he admires. Herein lies the difference between emulation and envy: the one would excel, by rising above its object; the other would have preeminence, by dragging down the superiority at which it repines.

In the Church, there is every thing to create humility, and to quicken emulation. Her principles of government, and the strictness with which she confines her ministrations to the proper officers, check the intruder who would presume to lay unhallowed hands upon the Ark. The strength of her foundations, which enables her to disregard the feeble enmity of opponents, forbids any friend to feel himself of importance. Let him be ever so distinguished for talent, and animated with ever so fervent zeal for her cause, it is enough for him to bring his gift to the altar, and to feel honoured if his best offering be accepted. Who can enter, without a deep sense of self-abasement, into the society of that illustrious array of worthies who adorn her history— her scholars, whose ponderous learning has

conferred such honour on their Country—her divines, those giants, before whom all the tangled sophistries of heresy, and infidelity, have been but as the shrubs of the thicket, which the elephant walks through without an effort—her saints, whose holy labours, like fruit-trees and water-springs by the wayside, refresh us on our journey — her martyrs, finally, with whose blood her foundations were cemented. In contemplating this noble army of champions for the truth, and now glorified spirits, how can a vain-glorious thought intrude? and what can we do but resolve, that with humble heart, and singleness of purpose, according to the talents committed to us, and the sphere in which we are called to exert them, we, by God's grace, will "follow those blessed saints in all virtuous and godly living, that we may come to those unspeakable joys which He hath prepared for them that unfeignedly love Him." He who thus humbleth himself shall truly be exalted; and such is the intellectual and moral greatness which the Church contains, that they who can best appreciate it, will feel the most humbled at the contemplation. Whatever may be the station, or talents, or pursuits of the individual; whether unlettered, or a scholar; a peasant, or a prince; the Church may always offer something much greater than himself; which, approving itself to his understanding, and awakening his better feelings, will exercise upon his character a continual elevating power.

But the first principle of Dissent is a principle of pride; for it is to make every man a standard to himself; teaching him to assert his independence of all authority, with his full right to think without control, and to act as he shall think proper. The miserable self-sufficiency which this principle tends to create, is fostered by every circumstance of his position. There is no one whose judgment he must respect, and whose authority he is required to obey; no office which is placed beyond his own reach. An embarrassed Meeting, and a dependent minister, give importance to every adherent; and if he be moderately respectable, he may feel that he confers an obligation upon the cause, and honours it by his patronage. There is nothing for the lowest to look up to, or which the narrowest understanding may not fully comprehend.

The isolated condition of every Meeting, and its entire dependence upon its own resources, make it the one object of interest to its adherents; and its generally struggling condition narrows their attention to the concerns of the passing moment. It prospers, and its neighbours of the same denomination are not advantaged: it declines, and they can offer no help: it is torn by factions, and they must not interfere.

Disguise itself as it may, independency is but the application of selfishness to religion, teaching every man to be wise in his own conceit, and in the loftiness of his heart, to esteem himself better than others. Hence the inconsistencies which strike us in the conduct of dissenters; now uniting with papists and socinians, now quarrelling with the brethren of their own Meeting. The selfish principle prompts to all. It leads them to act with any, and with all parties, to attack the Church; and, on the other hand, to regard every Meeting, of whatever denomination, as a rival, that clashes with their own. Again, when party questions arise within their own walls, this feeling, more intense as it approaches its centre, displays itself more fiercely towards the opposing faction; and, finally, when the individual feels his taste offended, or his vanity mortified, it leads him to discover that he can no longer profitably worship in his accustomed place, to plead conscience, and transfer his patronage elsewhere.

This picture is little flattering; but its faithfulness is fully confirmed by the admitted fact, that all Meetings are liable to party contests, and that the full knowledge of the ruinous tendency of these contests does not restrain the members from thus pursuing their objects. Evil and hurtful conduct, wherever it may appear, shews the presence and operation of a bad principle. If such conduct be general, the principle must be equally so; in fact, must be identified with the system out of which such consequences habitually proceed. And the principle which can prompt individuals, who have publicly made a distinct and peculiar profession of religion, to pursue an object of their own, at the expense of quarrelling with the Christian friends with whom

they are most intimately connected; and of bringing disgrace, if not ruin, upon the Christian cause to which they have committed themselves; can be nothing but selfishness, the most rooted in its nature, and the most intense in its operation. Nor let it be hoped that the principle exists only when such quarrels arise. Circumstances do not create principles, but only call them into action. Again, therefore, let it be affirmed, that the principle, which teaches that every man shall exalt his own judgment above that of all others, assume to be wiser than his teachers, and revolt at whatever would curb his fancies, rests upon pride, and selfishness. Regarded as a temptation, it would require much self-discipline, with watchfulness, and prayer, to subdue it. But how shall we estimate the mischief, when this bad principle is cherished as a religious duty, and assumed to be the proper foundation of a Christian church!

Where selfishness prevails, there can be no moral greatness. It contracts the heart, and debases the understanding. It is the parent of captiousness, jealousy, and envy; and these are emphatically mean vices.

It ought to be observed, that there is a very wide distinction between the principles of Dissent, and a large proportion of those who are called dissenters. These, having never been led to think closely upon the subject, nor taught to understand the nature of a Christian church, and of their own obligations to it, worship in the Meeting, either because they cannot conveniently attend the parish church, or from attachment to the minister, or from the prejudices of habit, and education, or from the example of their friends. They know little of dissenting principles, and refuse to lend themselves to Meeting-house politics, and contentions. Raised by personal character above the level of Dissent, a proper sense of self-respect forbids them to stoop to that level. Co-operation with the Church also, wherever it has taken place, has been eminently useful to Dissent, by imposing a check upon its violence, and tending to elevate, and expand its feelings. As far also as dissenters are blended with society, they are influenced by its general character. But these, and all other influences, which lessen the evils of Dissent, act upon it from without, and are entirely distinct from its own principles and nature. Abstracted from all these, Dissent, founded as it is upon earthly, and sinful principles, has a steady tendency to degrade its devoted adherents, and to estrange from it whatever refuses to be dragged down to its own level.

CHAPTER V.

The Church and Dissent, their Influence on Society.

When peace and order prevail in the arrangements of a private house; the heads of the family filling their proper place; the children being modest, dutiful, and affectionate; the servants, industrious, respectful, and attached; all under the influence of religion, whose authority is fully, but not ostentatiously avowed; and whose services are consistently, but not obtrusively performed; we dwell with pleasure on such a picture of domestic happiness, and justly form the most favourable anticipations of the future conduct, and success, of the younger, and the subordinate members. If, on the other hand, we find general disorder; and the authority of parents and masters disregarded, we look on with pity, and disgust. We anticipate nothing good for self-willed, disobedient children; or impertinent, and idle servants; and if in such a family there should be the profession, and forms of religion, they would seem almost a mockery.

Society itself is a great family, in which the general interest requires that some should govern, and many obey. The prosperity and happiness of every particular member, as of the whole, depend upon each duly filling his own sphere, and cheerfully performing its proper duties.

Happiness and prosperity, whether domestic, or social, or national, can have no sure foundation except religion; but there is that which claims for itself the name of religion, whose principles are mistaken, and whose operation is mischievous. I mean that which reasons, and acts, as if secular duties were opposed to a heavenly spirit; and confining the name of religion to express acts of worship, measures the piety of the individual by the frequency of

these, though positive duties should be neglected to attend to them.

Religion consists in fully performing all the duties of this life, upon principles, and motives, derived from the consideration of another. It must, therefore, make all who truly profess it, better members of society; and whenever it fails to do this, we have a right to conclude, that it is nothing more than personal enthusiasm, or sectarian politics.

The source and spring of the social virtues is the domestic fire-side. Every thing, therefore, should combine to make this attractive; and every comfort, with elegance, or at least with neatness, should be secured for home. It is here that all the affections are to be cherished in their strength and purity, which, creating a sense of mutual dependence, and leading every individual to find his chief happiness in promoting that of others, diffuse themselves beyond the domestic circle, through relatives and friends, to society at large. Nothing should interfere with this sanctuary of love and peace, which may chill its warmth, or disturb its quiet.

The intimacies formed beyond this circle, if they are to be useful, pleasant, or even safe, must exist between persons of equal station, and congenial minds. Unequal friendships lower the taste and tone of feeling of the superior, and create a presuming intrusiveness in the other; not without a disposition to make a flattering intimacy a subject of vain boasting, perhaps of unwarrantable breach of confidence. The intimacy forced by circumstances between persons equal in station, but uncongenial in taste, and pursuits, offers little to confirm regard, but much that may disturb it.

For the sake of all classes, the proper distinctions of society ought to be fully recognized. Thus only can general cordiality, and confidence exist, for the higher classes will "condescend to men of low estate," only while these "render honour to whom honour is due." That intercourse between them, which is marked by kindness and sympathy on the one side, and gratitude and respect on the other, is of inestimable value to both. It preserves the rich from the cold and heartless selfishness, which a life of mere pleasure creates; while it gives to the poor, comfort, encouragement, self-respect, and motives to good conduct, in the wish to deserve a flattering privilege, and the pride of enjoying it. But he who would be anxious to relieve a modest dependant from all painful sense of inferiority, by kindness and condescension, would feel it necessary to guard himself with a distant reserve, if his attention should be met with a presuming forwardness. Those principles therefore are the bane of the poor, that encourage them to assume an equality which their position denies. With them, as with all men, true respectability consists in performing the duties of their appointed stations. Whoever does this, will be deservedly respected, however lowly may be his lot; while the sturdy vagabond, insolent and discontented, is with equal justice shunned, and despised.

Finally, it is desirable that a spirit of good feeling should universally prevail, to enable all persons to act harmoniously together for public objects, as far as private duty, and religious principle will allow.

Such, then, are the conditions upon which the welfare of society depends:—quiet homes; select associates; due subordination; and general good feeling.

The Church promotes these objects by enforcing the principles upon which they rest, and abstaining from all direct interference. In her ministrations, she continually sets forth, and by her system she encourages, Christian humility, at once the most graceful and dignified of all virtues; and which, with Christian love, its kindred, and almost inseparable excellence, is the surest bond, and best ornament of society. While she claims to teach with authority, and guides the devotions of her flock, setting forth their duty in the words of Scripture, she intrudes into no man's home, and interferes with no man's private concerns. She makes religion entirely a matter of personal responsibility; offering her ministrations freely, but leaving it to every man's conscience to use, and improve them. She brings all classes together, to worship before Him in whose presence all are equal. We naturally feel interested in the welfare of those with whose persons we are familiar, when no party feeling interferes: and this is a very rare intruder within the church walls. Here the poor, whose families prove by their neatness

and good conduct the order which prevails at home, are sure to be favourably noticed, especially by the clergyman, the common friend of all: and here the rich have an opportunity, by that general affability, and those small attentions, which common good-feeling prompts, to gain the hearts of the poor. This is the slavery at which the Destructives so bitterly complain, as they now see and feel the effects of it in every county election,—the bonds of affection, which in the country, bind the multitude to their natural leaders. For the Church is utterly opposed to a levelling spirit; and her catechism, in which she requires all her disciples to be carefully instructed from early childhood, most clearly sets forth, and strongly enforces as a religious duty, the obedience, respect, and reverence, due to authorities and superiors of every name. Thus we invariably find in a country parish, that the poor who regularly attend their parish church, are distinguished for attachment, and respect, to their superiors; while this proper feeling every where becomes more and more weakened, as the people estrange themselves from church. It may be added as a fact, with which all who have lived in the country must be familiar, that the credit and comfort of the poor are in the same proportion. This, indeed, was to be expected. Upon general reasoning, we should conclude that the interests of man, even in this life, depend upon his observing whatever God has appointed; and experience confirms the truth.

Finally, the Church promotes general good feeling in society, by offering no encouragement to party spirit; for the perfect independence she enjoys prevents any man from feeling that his support is of consequence to her. Every one, therefore, attends her ministrations as a worshipper; not as a partizan, cherishing hostile sentiments towards all who differ from him. The proof is seen in the fact, that this liberal feeling has been carried much beyond the bounds of duty and prudence; for the clergy as well as the laity, have been in the habit of compromising many points involving church principles, that they might obtain union with avowed opponents. This mistake is not likely to be committed again: but in whatever concerns the secular interests of society, the Church will always cherish those generous feelings, and comprehensive views, which have hitherto distinguished her. Her enemies are deeply concerned in this question; for there is scarcely a dissenting tradesman who would not be ruined, if churchmen should follow the example of sectarians, and act upon the principles of exclusive dealing.

But the voluntary system interferes greatly with the order and peace of society. Its tendency is to subdivide to the lowest point at which a Meeting can be supported; and hence the great majority of Meetings are very poor, and claim the unceasing, and strenuous exertions of all their friends. As a necessary consequence, the Meeting becomes a subject of paramount interest, and engrosses time and attention, which ought to be devoted to social, and domestic duties.

The system is peculiarly destructive to the character of young females; and how much the best interests of society depend upon the female character it is unnecessary to shew. Unhappily, they are made the chief agents in the every-day work of the cause. Men are occupied with business; matrons with domestic concerns; but young women have leisure; and, from their inexperience, and their natural warmth of feeling, excited by what may be called sensual devotion,* they are easily "led captive." To work for the bazaar, to distribute the tracts, to collect the weekly pence from door to door, for the Mission, for the Bible Association, for the Meeting-house debt, and I have even known them employed, incredible as it may appear, to collect the pew-rents! these tasks devolve upon them, to be executed under the direction of the men, who-

* I allude to such as the following:—

Lord what a heaven of saving grace
Shines through the beauties of thy face,
And lights our passions to a flame:—
Lord, how I love thy charming name.

And have I, Lord, no love for thee,
No passion for thy charms;
No wish my Saviour's face to see,
And dwell within his arms!

Come, let me love; or is my mind
Harden'd to stone, or froze to ice;
I see the blessed fair one bend,
And stoop t' embrace me from the skies.

ever they may happen to be, who take a lead in the Meeting. The needful excitement is kept up by frequent evening meetings, sometimes protracted to a very late hour by a second more private service, which begins after the regular evening service is over. Calls upon fellow-labourers to discuss present business, and future plans, amuse leisure intervals. In this life of dissipation, which possesses the evils of fashionable dissipation without its refinement, domestic duties are neglected, and domestic feelings destroyed. Home is merely the place where they live and sleep: their pleasures are sought abroad. In excuse for thus employing young females, it is said, that they make the best beggars! How must all that is lovely in their character be wrecked, before this can be true!

Women are properly the ministers of charity. To relieve the distressed, to comfort the afflicted, to instruct the ignorant, and to soothe the aged, are offices of love for which their natural delicacy and gentleness peculiarly fit them. But how different these, from extorting the hard-earned pence of reluctant poverty! And how different the modest privacy of true charity, from the rivalry between two collectors, whether the one shall extract the greatest number of pennies from this court, or the other from that alley!

The sacrifice of domestic enjoyment, inevitable where the interests of home are made a secondary object, is not the worst. A positive evil is sometimes created in the gall of party bitterness; for, in Meeting-house disputes, the members of a family do not always take the same side; and then some degree of estrangement is inevitable. Where a family is large, the members are almost sure to attach themselves to different sects as they grow up; thus placing feelings of sectarian rivalry in opposition to natural affection.

The choice of associates among dissenters is determined chiefly by the interests of the Meeting. They who struggle together in a common cause almost necessarily become intimate; and while the new adherent to that cause is welcomed to the social circle, the deserter is excluded from it. Persons generally ill-assorted, but brought together by one common interest, naturally make this their constant theme; and accordingly, the concerns of the Meeting, or of the sect, are their general subject of conversation. They dwell with complacency on the fancied excellences of their own party, and on the defects of rivals; a practice calculated to create, and greatly to strengthen, pride in themselves, and prejudices against the rest of society. A system of promiscuous visiting levels distinctions; and proper subordination is destroyed by a plan of church government, which denies all power to "hearers," however respectable; and confers it entirely upon the "members," among whom respectability is the exception.

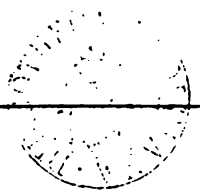
Such, then, are the blessings which Dissent confers upon society:—to make its positive duties subservient to the interests of the Meeting; to interfere with the peace, duties, and affections of home; to corrupt the female character; to control social intercourse; to create party spirit; to level distinctions; and to destroy subordination; enabling, and encouraging, the low and ignorant to usurp that power which belongs to their superiors.

After this explanation, it is easy to understand why the educated classes leave Dissent. Its principles, as connected with religious worship, have usually a very slight hold, when they are not blended with its politics. But respectable persons, who retain a proper sense of what is due to their station and character, cannot stoop to questions of low party. Habit, or attachment to the minister, may fix them, perhaps for life, to their accustomed place of worship; but they merely attend for worship, and give their pecuniary support. Their children are educated; they enter into general society; they acquire the enlarged views, the correct taste, the refinement, which education and good society impart. Possessing these, it is impossible that they should become dissenters.

It is right to state that, in very large towns, the evils of the system are greatly mitigated by local circumstances; and particularly, by the greater respectability of dissenting congregations. Indeed, from the expense of supporting a Meeting in such a town, it must sink without respectable support. This respectability, however, is obtained by practically excluding the poor. Yet, in the union of the three Denominations of dissenters in London, the socinians, few in comparison as they are,

were able to take a very decided lead; a result, of which the most creditable explanation for the orthodox dissenters is the fact, that they fall short of the others in general respectability, more than they exceed them in numbers.

The effect of the voluntary principle upon public charities ought not to be overlooked. The heavy demands it makes upon its followers for the support of their own cause, and for objects connected with it, require all that they can spare, and often more than, in justice to themselves, they can afford. Amidst urgent claims, thus enforced by party considerations, the quiet appeals of local charities are overlooked. Accordingly, it is proved, by very extended and close inquiries, that a very small proportion of the subscriptions to public hospitals, dispensaries, and other similar institutions, is derived from dissenters.—In fact, that to charities in which all the community have an equal interest, the subscriptions of the clergy alone exceed those of their whole body.



THE CHURCH ESTABLISHED ON THE BIBLE;

OR, THE DOCTRINES AND DISCIPLINE OF THE CHURCH SHEWN, IN THE ORDER AND CONNEXION OF THE SERVICES SHE APPOINTS FROM THE SCRIPTURES.

FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT.

Christians tried, and Sinners judged.

Morning Lesson. Genesis xix. 1—29.
Evening Lesson. Genesis xxii.
Epistle . . . 2 Corinth. vi. 1—10.
Gospel . . . St. Matthew iv. 1—11.

The Scriptures often dwell upon the sufferings of God's people, contrasted with the prosperity of the wicked. The Old Testament, in which temporal blessings are an important object of promise, encourages to submission by pointing to the end of good and bad men. The 37th, and especially the 73d Psalms, enter fully into this subject. The New Testament takes higher ground, and offers sanctified affliction as an occasion for rejoicing. God is our father; and the sorrows and trials He lays upon us, like the correction of an earthly parent, are evidences of his love and care. They are the deserved chastisement of sin; or the discipline by which He prepares us for our inheritance; or the means of honouring his faithful people, by proving the excellence, and displaying the full lustre, of the virtues to which they have attained.

God had blessed Lot with very great possessions, so that the land in which he dwelt with Abraham, his uncle, could not bear them together. Thinking only of his riches, he chose his residence from worldly motives, "and dwelled in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tent towards Sodom." "But the men of Sodom were wicked, and sinners before the Lord, exceedingly." He "vexed himself, day by day, with their filthy conversation and unlawful deeds;" 2 Peter ii. 8.: yet lived among them still; and did not scruple, as appears from the fate of his sons-in-law, to betroth his daughters to ungodly men. At length he was punished, as the morning lesson relates, in being reduced at once from a wealthy prince, to a destitute fugitive. He chose his own sinful way, and there he found his punishment.

Abraham, righteous and faithful, was called to a trial hard above all others: to take his son, his only son Isaac, whom he loved, and offer him for a burnt offering. But his faith was firm, and he delayed not to obey, "accounting that God was able to raise him up even from the dead." Though he had three

days to feel the bitterness of the bereavement, on his journey to the place which God had appointed, he wavered not in his purpose. He prepared, and was in the very act of completing the sacrifice, when God stayed his hand. Therefore extraordinary blessings were declared for him; and his name remains a glorious example of triumphant faith.

St. Paul, in the epistle, enumerates severe trials, which are the Christian's portion: but what then? Though no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous, yet afterwards it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness, to them that are exercised thereby. Trials purify and strengthen. When the world fails us, we look to heaven: we learn the deceitfulness of our hearts, when our tempers and resolutions are brought to the test; and we honour our Christian profession, when it is seen how religion can support us.

Severe if our trials be, we are not required to bear them in our own strength. God gives grace to help us, who is always ready to hear and succour; and, the greatest of all encouragements, Christ himself, as we learn in the gospel, endured temptation. "We have not an high priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are." "In that he hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted." "Let us, therefore, come boldly to a throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help us in every time of need."

From the trials of God's people, sinners, perhaps, escape. Are they happy, therefore? On the one hand, afflictions, but with the comfort of God's presence; trials, but with his support; storms, but with his peace; disappointments, but with a sure and steadfast hope fixed on heaven. On the other, pleasures without satisfaction, and a future without hope. Short is the day of enjoyment to the most prosperous sinner; fearful the judgment that awaits him in the evening. How are they brought into desolation in a moment; and cast down to sudden destruction! The situation of Sodom was even as the garden of the Lord. Its wealth and pleasantness tempted Lot from his duty. But worldly prosperity is no mark of God's favour. Its cup of guilt was even then full, though the people knew and cared not. One last warning of chastisement and mercy was given, in their captivity and deliverance by Abraham; but it was in vain. In the very hour that judgment should be executed, and when the angels of justice were within their walls, they were openly rioting in the most abominable vice. They had lived in thoughtless and wicked pleasure, and judgment overtook them in the midst of it. "They did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom, it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all."

XII.

The Lord! in Him I put my trust;
Why should I faint and flee away,
When guilt conspires against the just;
Though truth and peace from earth decay.

The Lord is in his holy place;
His righteous throne is fixed on high;
The thoughts and ways of all our race
His searching eyes severely try.

From all the trials of the good,
Glory, and strength, and peace shall flow;
But, like an overwhelming flood,
The wicked shall his vengeance know!

Snares, and destruction, storm, and fire,
The portion of their cup shall be;
For God doth righteousness require,
And only truth his face shall see.

Psalm XI.

XIII.

Lord, how I love thy holy law,
And make thy ways my chief delight;
My daily comforts thence I draw;
Thy love employs my thoughts by night:

I've hid thy word within my heart;
So shall my light and strength increase;
What blessed hope thy truths impart;
What holy joy; what perfect peace!

By them, I shun the fatal snare,
When guilty pleasures tempt my soul;
By them, unmoved when sinners fear,
I see thine awful judgments roll:

Fix'd on a hope so firm, so sure,
What should my steadfast heart dismay?
Thy word, O God, shall still endure,
When Heaven and Earth shall pass away.

SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT.

Unbelief, Fraud, and Impurity condemned.

Morning Lesson . Genesis xxvii.
Evening Lesson . Genesis xxxiv.
Epistle . . . 1 Thess. iv. 1—8.
Gospel . . . St. Matthew xv. 21—28.

The services for this day condemn all sin, as represented by three most capital offences, against God, against man, and against ourselves: — distrusting God's word; injuring others by fraud aud falsehood; and dishonouring our own bodies by uncleanness. The warning contained in the epistle is illustrated by the lessons, in the guilt and punishment of persons, from most of whom better things might have been expected.

God had declared before the birth of Esau and Jacob, that the elder should serve the younger, Gen. xxv. 23; and Esau had by his own act confirmed the decree, when he profanely sold his birthright. But Rebecca, though she knew this, for God's declaration was in answer to her own inquiry; and though unbelief was peculiarly aggravated in her, the daughter-in-law of faithful Abraham, and the wife of the child of promise, yet, as if God's purpose could depend upon her sin, she committed a deliberate fraud upon her blind husband, to obtain the blessing for her favourite son. Her sin appears the darker by contrast with the bright example of faith recorded in the gospel. Little would be expected from the Syrophenician woman; a Greek, and probably brought up in idolatry; yet she professes faith in Christ as the promised Messiah, "O Lord, thou Son of David." How does she wrestle in prayer in the true spirit of Israel, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me!" persevering, in spite of the Lord's most discouraging silence, and turning his apparently contemptuous repulse into a plea,—"the dogs eat of the crumbs that fall from the children's table." Well might she receive the commendation: "O woman, great is thy faith, be it unto thee even as thou wilt!"

"This is the will of God . . . . . that no man go beyond, or defraud his brother in any matter; because that the Lord is the avenger of all such." God visits more especially those sins which escape the judgment of man. Rebecca's fraud was successful; and the effect was to oblige her to send away her darling son to save him from his brother's vengeance; and she never saw him again. Jacob, by deceit and falsehood, obtained his father's blessing; and deceit and falsehood embittered all his future life; deceived in his wife; more cruelly deceived, and by his own children, in the loss of his favourite son. Simeon and Levi avenged their sister's dishonour by a cruel and impious fraud; for which their father, on his death-bed, pronounced God's judgment. They were deprived of the privilege of their birthright, which was given to their younger brother Judah; and their descendants were divided and scattered in Israel, instead of forming compact and powerful tribes.

The sin of all others the most destructive, whether in the misery it occasions, the disorder it produces in society, or its influence in degrading and demoralizing individual character, is the illicit commerce of the sexes. History abounds with examples where the guilty passion of an individual has brought ruin upon a nation: every day it wrecks the happiness of families: and at this moment it creates a mass of guilt and misery around us most horrible to contemplate. Tens of thousands of miserable beings, who as virtuous wives and mothers, would have been blessings to society, are prowling through the metropolis, and multitudes, unhappily, in almost every town, inciters to crime, the companions of thieves, the tempters and destroyers of young men; with no prospect for them but wretchedness in this life, and perdition in the next. These things we pass with indifference, as evils too enormous for us to combat, or matters too notorious to claim a thought.

Few have much power to mitigate the evils which scourge society; but every one has influence in his own circle, and at all events is accountable for himself. The more difficult to make this sin the subject of public caution, the more necessary that each should be his own monitor. Let him remember that his body is the temple of the living God, and shrink with horror from defiling it. Nor let

him only abhor the sin, but also avoid temptation. The first step in a path, of which the last is a plunge to perdition is perhaps no more than foolish trifling. None can foresee the consequences of an act of sinful folly. The vain curiosity of Dinah, and the imprudent indulgence of her mother, brought ruin upon herself, shame upon her family, and the guilt of treachery and blood upon her brethren: and the criminal passion of Shechem, for which he afterwards vainly attempted to atone, was the destruction of himself, his father, and his people.

XIV.

O God, whose mercy, truth, and love,
From age to age endure;
Whose word, though heaven and earth remove,
Shall stand for ever sure;—

We bind thy promise to our heart;
We plead it in our prayer;
Increase our faith; thy strength impart;
And guide us in thy fear.

May we, by sacred precepts taught,
In righteous paths proceed;
Holy and pure in every thought,
And true in word and deed.

Walk as the children of the day,
And shun the deeds of shame;
Adorn thy doctrine; keep thy way;
And glorify thy Name.

THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT.

Purity amidst temptation; and constancy under trials.

Morning Lesson . .	Genesis xxxix.
Evening Lesson . .	Genesis xlii.
Epistle	Ephesians v. 1—14.
Gospel	St. Luke xi. 14—28.

In the services for the last Sunday, we are warned against certain flagrant sins. We are now called to admire and practise the opposite virtues. An illustrious example is offered for our imitation, and the strength is shewn in which we may perform them.

No narrative in the Bible is more interesting than the history of Joseph; and perhaps no character is altogether so lovely as his. Always amiable, gentle, and affectionate, it is necessary to consider well the trials he endured to understand his invincible integrity, and heroic virtue. The example of his elder brethren was most pernicious. We hear little or no good of them, but much that is very bad; yet he was neither seduced to sin by their example, nor provoked to anger by their envy and hatred. At the age of seventeen, he was treacherously sold to be a slave; but he kept his faith unshaken, and remained, the only worshipper of God, in a land of idolaters. Exalted in Potiphar's house, he shews no weakness in the height of prosperity. Tempted to sin by his mistress, he chose a prison with his integrity, before a palace with guilt. A prisoner for many a long year, without a prospect of release, and with none to comfort him, his spirit never sinks. From the depth of calamity he is suddenly exalted to power and glory, and all his life after sustains a dignity next the throne; but the simplicity, integrity, and gentleness of his character remain to the last unchanged. Exposed to every variety and extreme of trials, he passed nobly through all. No man could have said with such propriety, "I have set the Lord always before me; because He is at my right hand, I shall not be moved."

The example of this good and noble patriarch is a commentary on the epistle. Are we called to "walk in love, as Christ loved us?" Observe the affection with which he repaid the cruelty of his brethren. Is any tempted? Mark the virtue of Joseph: "how can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God!" Would the world, and its goods turn aside the heart? See, in his admirable character, how little true dignity depends upon station and circumstances; and how it is possible, through religion, to attain to a greatness, which neither prosperity can exalt, nor adversity depress.

The most beautiful feature in his character is its perfect simplicity. Nothing is done with an effort: every act of his life appears just what ought to be done, and no more than any one might do. In this respect, no example recorded for our instruction so closely resembles that of our Lord. We derive from the history, in connexion with the epistle and gospel, an encouragement, and a caution.

Joseph, like all of us, shared the infirmities of a fallen nature: "that fault and

corruption of the nature of every man that naturally is engendered of theo ffspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and is of his own nature inclined to evil." He was victorious in every trial, not by his own goodness, or strength, but through that grace of God, which is freely offered to every man, and sufficiently imparted to all, who rightly seek, and improve it. Strengthened by this grace, nothing has been achieved by the most triumphant saint, which is not possible to the feeblest penitent.

The epistle shows us the bondage from which we are delivered; "ye were sometime darkness;" the sinful dispositions and actions we must be careful to avoid: and the holy tempers and duties we are required to cultivate and practise. It warns us at the same time of the fatal consequences of trifling with sin, and walking in a manner inconsistent with our profession and hope.

In the gospel we learn what is the strength in which we may perform all that is required of us. It represents us delivered from the power of the devil by a stronger than he, even by Christ; whose grace will keep us to the end; for the right hand of God's majesty is our sufficient defence against all enemies. But then, we are required to co-operate with hearty desires and strenuous exertions. "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad." That we may be stirred up to a sense of the necessity of this exertion, our Lord shews the awful condition of him who falls a second time under the dominion of the wicked one:—"the last state of that man is worse than the first." Finally, he warns us against presuming upon our privileges. Highly favoured are we who bear his name; but they are blessed who "hear the word of God, and keep it."

XV.

How happy is the quiet breast,
  The pure and lowly mind,
Pleased on a faithful God to rest;
  At peace with all mankind:

Content to bear its lot below,
  Assured of hopes above;
And blest in every change to know
  A Father's constant love.

And such, O Lord, my portion be,—
  A spirit pure, and mild;
A gracious Father Thou to me;
  And I, a little child:

The thought should always calm my fear,—
  I'm at my Father's side:
And this should keep from anxious care,—
  My Father will provide.

FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT,

CALLED ALSO MID-LENT SUNDAY.

Free Grace shewn in forgiveness and blessings.

Morning Lesson Genesis xliii.
Evening Lesson Genesis xlv.
Epistle . . . Galatians iv. 21—31.
Gospel . . . St. John vi. 1—14.

There is a close agreement between the history of Joseph, and his conduct towards his brethren, and that of our Lord, in his dealings towards us. Three striking points will be found in this day's services.—Thinking only to gratify the malice and envy they bore against him, Joseph's brethren most wickedly sold him. But God over-ruled their crime, as He over-ruled the malice of the Jews, to the fulfilment of his gracious purposes, in preserving the family of Israel, and saving much people alive. Seeking deliverance from death, the offenders came to their injured brother, now, by God's appointment, their lord. He freely forgave, and received them, as Christ receives us, not as pardoned criminals, but as the brethren of his love. They were perishing of famine, and he established them in a good land, where he nourished them abundantly. So Christ brings perishing sinners into his Church; where he abundantly satisfies them with the fatness of his house, and makes them to drink of the river of his pleasures.

The epistle presents in contrast the rigour of the Law, and the blessings of the Gospel. In the Law, which is a covenant of bondage and death, "we, who for our evil deeds do worthily deserve to be punished," have nothing to hope. But a covenant of liberty and life is established in Christ, into which, entering through him, "we, by the comfort of God's grace, may mercifully be relieved.

Like Joseph's brethren, we receive free pardon for all our sins, and full supplies for all our necessities.

Joseph, by the wisdom which God gave him, saved Israel and Egypt alive. Christ, by his own divine power, fed the multitude, as the gospel relates, by a miracle. We shall understand these types, by referring to the latter part of the chapter, St. John vi., where our Lord explains that he is himself that living bread that cometh down from heaven, of which, if any man eat, he shall live for ever: "For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world." "Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him." St. John vi. 53—56. May it be granted unto us so to eat his flesh, and to drink his blood, that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body, and our souls washed through his most precious blood, and that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. Amen.

XVI.

LORD, on whose bounty we depend,
By whom alone all creatures live,
The constant blessings thou dost send,
With grateful hearts may we receive;
And, while thy streams of mercy pour,
Thy gracious providence adore.

Blest be thy name for earthly good!
Thrice blest for richer mercies, given
So freely through the Saviour's blood;—
Pardon, and peace, and life, and heaven:
Fulfill'd with goodness thus divine,
Let all our hearts, O God, be thine!

FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT,

CALLED ALSO PASSION SUNDAY.

Christ our Almighty Saviour, and Great High Priest.

Morning Lesson .	Exodus iii.
Evening Lesson .	Exodus v.
Epistle . . .	Hebrews ix. 11—15.
Gospel . .	St. John viii. 46—59.

Enslaved under a cruel tyranny, and bowed down with bitter bondage, the children of Israel served their hard taskmasters, till the appointed time was come; Gen. xv. 13—16. But they saw no prospect of deliverance. They could not help themselves; and if they could have known whom God had appointed to save them, small would have been their hope from a man 80 years old, and who had lived in obscurity as a shepherd for the last forty years.

Yet, if we consider the circumstances of the life of Moses, we shall find them well adapted to prepare him for the office he was to sustain. He was to be a prince and lawgiver; and he was brought up in a court, and instructed in all the learning of Egypt. He would be required to bear with the waywardness of a stubborn and rebellious people; and he was trained to self-command by a long course of retirement.

The Scriptures, rightly studied, give no countenance whatever to that lazy and vain enthusiasm, which expects extraordinary results, through God's help, without the use of proper, and reasonable means. This fancy springs from presumption, not faith; from pride, not devotion; from indolence, not zeal. God gives all the help we require; and accomplishes results so disproportioned to the means, that all must confess his hand, and none can glory in his presence. But He does not work miracles, to enable the vain and ignorant to effect that, which is within the scope of human talents, properly improved and exerted.

The first point to be observed in the services for this day is, that the Divine Person who came to deliver Israel, who appeared to Moses in the burning bush, and declared himself the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, was no other than our Redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ; who is called in the morning lesson, v. 2, the Angel of the Lord; and elsewhere, the Messenger, or Angel of the Covenant, Mal. iii. 1; and the Angel of God's presence, Isa. lxiii. 9. This is also evident from the gospel, in which our Lord declares, "before Abraham was, I AM!" thus claiming for himself that Name of self-existent being, by which God commanded Moses to make Him known to the children of Israel. The Jews perfectly understood him to assert his Godhead, and immediately attempted to stone him for blasphemy

By how much the accomplishment exceeds the type, by so much is the work of Redemption more glorious than the deliverance from Egypt. Moses, invested with power from on high, could execute judgment upon Pharoah, and bring forth the chosen people. But no servant could destroy our tyrants, Sin and Death, and achieve salvation for all mankind. None could quicken even his own soul; Psalm xxii. 29; only the Lord himself could give liberty to the captives. He hath delivered us from bondage, and given us an inheritance of eternal life; as he declares in the gospel, "if a man keep my sayings, he shall never see death." The Lord, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, who, by the hand of Moses, brought forth Israel from their captivity, hath by himself wrought this everlasting salvation for us, that we might be a holy people to serve him.

In the evening lesson, and the preceding chapter, Aaron, the chosen Priest of the Lord, enters upon his office to intercede for Israel. When the Law was afterwards given, his duties as intercessor were defined, to make atonement for offences with blood. Entering with the blood of calves and of goats "into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true," he offered for himself, and for the sins of the people. But "Christ being come, an High-priest of good things to come," hath entered by his own blood, not into the most holy place of an earthly tabernacle, or temple, but into heaven itself, having obtained eternal redemption for us. He, who will come as our Judge, once came to be our Saviour, and is now entered into heaven, there continually to remain our High-priest and intercessor; who having with his own blood redeemed his people from death, and purchased for them the promise of an eternal inheritance, now offers up their sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving, and pleads his own merits on their behalf.

XVII.

Saviour, whom our hearts adore!
Mighty, everlasting God!
Come with majesty and power;
Take the purchase of thy blood!

Joyful anthems we begin;
Songs of triumph raise to thee;
Thou hast conquer'd Death and Sin;
Thou hast set the captives free!

Glorious Victor! strong to save;
Full deliverance thou hast given!
Vain the terrors of the grave;
Through the flood we pass to heaven:

Sing, ye ransom'd of the Lord,
Raised by him to thrones above;
Angels, join with glad accord;
Sing the triumphs of his love!

SUNDAY NEXT BEFORE EASTER,

CALLED ALSO PALM SUNDAY.

Christ exalted through humiliation and suffering.

Morning Lessons	Exodus ix.
	St. Matthew xxvi.
Evening Lessons	Exodus x.
	Heb. v. 1—10.
Epistle . . .	Philippians, ii. 5—11.
Gospel . . .	St. Matthew xxvii.

The fullness and extent of the services appointed for Passion Week and Easter are in proportion to the importance of the facts they commemorate, and the doctrines they teach. For ten successive days there are services, generally both evening, and morning; in which, besides the Psalms, and some lessons used in their order, we read fifty select portions of Scripture, thirty-two being entire chapters. Among these, the chapters in the four Gospels which describe our Lord's Passion are all read in their order; beginning to-day with St. Matthew, and ending on Good Friday with St. John. It is evidently the intention of the Church that the whole of this period should be consecrated to devotion as far as necessary duties will allow. If, therefore, we are prevented from worshipping at church, we should be careful to make the appointed service a part of our devotions at home, and in any case, to abstain from whatever may divert attention from the solemn considerations proper to the season.

On the first Sunday of Advent, we read of our Lord's public entrance into Jerusalem, the event which occurred on this day, and from which it obtained the name of Palm

Lord God help us we shall not be confounded. While He is near to justify us, we may defy the malice of our enemies. Who then is he that feareth the Lord? Let him obey the voice of his servant! Who is he "that walketh in darkness and hath no light?" Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God! "Then, though he walk through the valley of the shadow of death, he shall fear no evil." But they who trust in their own wisdom and strength, shall know too late the vanity of their dependence. "Behold all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks, walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled. This shall ye have of mine hand; ye shall lie down with sorrow."

XX.

Awed by a mortal's frown, shall I
Fear to confess the Lord most High?
And taught, and strengthen'd by his hand,
Shrink to endure his just command?

Shall I, to please the thoughtless throng,
Soften thy truth, and smooth my tongue;
Or, lured with idle pleasures, flee
The cross, O Lord, endured by Thee?

And what is man; his pride, and power?
The passing vapour of an hour!
In me fulfil thy pleasure, Lord;
Thy will be done, thy Name adored!

Preserve my soul, for I am thine;
Confirm my heart with strength divine;
Let me thy sure salvation see;
And glorify Thyself in me.

WEDNESDAY BEFORE EASTER.

Redemption.

Morning Lessons	Hosea xiii.
	St. John xi. 45—57.
Evening Lesson	Hosea xiv.
Epistle . .	Hebrews ix. 16—28.
Gospel . .	St. Luke xxii.

We are taught in the services for this day, that we are redeemed from death, which is the deserved penalty of our sin, by the sacrifice of Christ; whose offering of himself, "once made, is that perfect Redemption, Propitiation, and Satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual; and there is none other satisfaction for sin but that alone."

The lessons appointed from the Old Testament display the whole subject in its order. First, we read of the idolatry of Ephraim, aggravated by God's goodness, in bringing him out of Egypt, preserving him in the wilderness, and filling him with blessings; but which blessings, instead of inspiring him with a sense of grateful dependence, had exalted him in his own eyes, till he forgat God.

The vanity of the sinner's hope is expressed, v. 3, by imagery, similar to Psalms i. 4, and lxviii. 2; and the terrors of God's wrath, by the rage of the fiercest and most powerful beasts. The great truth is then declared, that our perdition is of ourselves; our salvation of the Lord: "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself, but in me is thine help!" Then the promise of redemption is proclaimed:—"I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death; O death, I will be thy plagues: O grave, I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes." The last expression agrees with Rom. xi. 29, and signifies that God will never repent of his promise and purpose of mercy. The Evening Lesson presents Israel returning to God with penitence and supplication; disclaiming all that he once trusted, restored to favour, and flourishing in the enjoyment of every spiritual blessing.

In the second morning lesson we find the wicked policy of Caiaphas overruled to foretel that Jesus should die for the people, and not for the nation of the Jews only, but also "that he should gather together in one all the children of God that are scattered abroad." The necessity for his death to ratify the New Testament of redemption and life; the superior efficacy of his blood over the sacrifices of the law; his effectual intercession, who hath entered, as our High Priest, "into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us;" the completeness of his one offering; and the salvation he shall bring at his second coming to those who look for him, are described in the epistle.

There is a subject, which has already been slightly touched on the sixth Sunday after the Epiphany, whose importance, coupled with the

fact that t has been generally, if not quite overlooked, may now claim particular notice: that the restoration of the Jews is foretold in various parts of the Old Testament as a type of the Resurrection. The predictions, like that of our Lord, which refers at once to the destruction of Jerusalem, and the last Judgment, contain passages which have only a literal meaning, connected with others which convey a more extensive and important signification; or else they bear with equal force and propriety two meanings, the one literal, the other figurative. The first sentence of Isaiah xxv. 8, "He shall swallow up death in victory," is applied by the Apostle, 1 Cor. xv. 54, to the Resurrection; but the latter clause, "the rebuke of his people shall be taken away from off all the earth," applies literally to the reproach and scorn which attach to the Jews, as the following chapter shews. Again, Isaiah xxvi. 19, "Thy dead men," will equally apply to the Jews, quickened with spiritual life, when their nation, now politically dead, shall rise and live again as a body politic; or to the bodies of the saints, who shall awake from the dust, as the dead body of Christ arose. The expression in the same verse, "thy dew is as the dew of herbs;" and the similar one, Isaiah lxvi. 20, "thy bones shall flourish as an herb," which the Jews have always repeated by the side of the grave at their funerals, to express their hope of a resurrection, have an evident reference to the image, Job xiv. 7—10, and declare, that as a plant, which had died from off the face of the ground, flourishes and springs up again from the roots when watered from heaven, so the dead shall at last rise from the dust, renewed to life and beauty. The passage, Isaiah lxvi. 20, and indeed the chapter generally, is to be understood literally of the restoration of the Jews; but there are many expressions which cannot be restricted to this meaning; and the punishment of God's enemies is described in the last verse, in the words which our Lord employs to express the final judgment upon sinners; "their worm shall not die, and their fire shall not be quenched." The restoration of Israel, again, is compared to life from the dead, Ezekiel xxxvii. 11—14, and Romans xi. 15; and the passage which occurs in the services for this day, Hosea xiii. 14, while its direct meaning is, that Israel shall be quickened with spiritual life, yet is to be understood chiefly of the period when death, the last enemy shall be destroyed; for in this sense the Apostle refers to it, 1 Cor. xv. 55.

Redemption is complete! Christ, who hath redeemed our souls from the curse of the law, will also redeem our bodies "from the power of the grave," Psalms xlix. 15; cxxx. 7; Luke xxi. 28; Romans viii. 23; having vanquished death by his own resurrection. To him, therefore, that liveth, and was dead, and is alive for evermore; and who hath the keys of death and hell, to him be glory and dominion for ever. Amen.

XXI.

Saviour, whose love could stoop to death,
To raise us to the sky,
With holy joy, and humble faith,
We on thy name rely.

No works, nor merits of our own,
Had claim'd thy gracious care;
'Twas mercy drew thee from thy throne,
The sinner's wo to bear.

Redeem'd with thy most precious blood,
From Sin and Death set free,
Now we become the sons of God,
For ever one with thee.

Glory to him who came to save;
Who died our life to bring!
Where is thy Vict'ry now, O Grave!
O Death, where is thy sting!

THURSDAY BEFORE EASTER.

The Holy Communion.

Morning Lessons	Daniel ix.	St. John xiii.
Evening Lesson	Jeremiah xxxi.	
Epistle . . .	I Corinthians xi. 17—34.	
Gospel . . .	St Luke xxiii.	

Our attention is this day directed to two of the most important prophecies in all Scripture. The revelation to Daniel of the seventy weeks, that is, four hundred and ninety years, which should elapse "from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah, the Prince," fixed the exact date when our Saviour should appear.

and led to a general expectation of his coming at the actual time of his birth. In the 7th year of Artaxerxes Longimanus, the Jews, who had hitherto been prevented by the intrigues of their enemies from availing themselves of the decree of Cyrus, obtained the ratification of this decree from the king; in virtue of which, Ezra returned from Babylon with a body of Jews, and restored a regular government—Ezra vii. This occurred 457 years before the Christian era, to which, adding the years of the life of Christ, 33, the time foretold ends with his death.

The details of the prophecy are equally precise. The end of Messiah's coming was "to finish the trangression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision of prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy." Messiah was to be cut off,—the Hebrew verb expresses death by a judicial sentence,—but not for himself; after which, Jerusalem should be utterly destroyed for the guilt of the people.

The evening lesson foretells the redemption of Israel through Christ, and with language and feelings suitable to the blessings connected therewith. It declares his miraculous conception, verse 22; and as Dan. ix. 27, predicts, that Christ shall end the covenant of the law, by causing the sacrifice and oblation to cease; *this* shews the establishment of a new and everlasting covenant of truth, mercy, and righteousness; verse 31—34; a passage which St. Paul quotes and applies, Heb. viii.

The death of our Lord, and the blessings it obtained for us, which are thus foretold in the morning and evening lessons, are thankfully commemorated by all the faithful in that holy Sacrament, which he instituted on "the same night in which he was betrayed;" and which the Church therefore hath appointed to be considered on this day.

The circumstances of the appointment of the Holy Communion, as they are related, and in almost the same words, by the Evangelists Matthew, Mark, and Luke, have been read in the services for Sunday, Monday, and Wednesday. In the Epistle to-day, St. Paul repeats and applies them, with some important cautions concerning the right partaking, and against the abuse of it. In the second morning lesson, we are taught, by our Lord's word and example, that we should come to it with purity and charity. They who are meet partakers are washed and sanctified: they who are his disciples indeed, are renewed according to his spirit, in humility and love. A commemorative rite, of course, presumes faith in him whose death it commemorates.

The appointment of our Lord makes it the duty and the privilege of all his disciples to communicate; and that, not occasionally, as a decent observance of the ordinances of the Church, but as often as the opportunity is given, for the sake of the spiritual blessings obtained thereby. On the other hand, St. Paul warns the Corinthians of the danger of receiving unworthily; which he shews them to have done by the disorderly manner in which they had met together; the richer among them feasting selfishly on the food they brought, regardless of the destitution of their poorer brethren; so that while one was hungry, having nothing, another was drunken from excess. The order of the Church now prevents such irregularity; but we may, notwithstanding, offend like the Corinthians in spirit, though not in manner. Their offence was, that they came to the Holy Communion without the disposition which it required; and they stood convicted of want of faith, "not regarding the Lord's body," by their irregularities, from which a due sense of his presence would have certainly kept them; of want of purity, by the excess to which they indulged; and of want of charity, by their disregard of their poorer brethren. And if we approach, as a mere matter of decency, and without sincere endeavours after holiness, and while we cherish a resentful disposition against any, we are guilty in heart like them. Should we then stay away? St. Paul says not so, but enjoins all to examine themselves, and so come. Thus our Church exhorts, "if any man say, I am a grievous sinner, and therefore am afraid to come, wherefore then do ye not repent and amend." He who is unfit to come to the altar, condemns himself when he kneels in prayer, for he says, "forgive us, *as* we forgive." He is verily guilty who profanes Christian privileges; but is he safe who neglects them?

Unfitness lies, not in sin, but impenitence. The sacrament is a means of grace, which all

may, and ought to receive, who truly desire the blessings it conveys, and to cherish the spirit it requires. If it were a privilege restricted to such as have made certain attainments in religion, *who* could judge of his own fitness; and what man or party should presume to decide who should be admitted or repelled? But the best can come only as sinners: the feeblest may bring sincerity; and if any one think himself to possess a fitness beyond this, he so far trusts to his own merits, instead of casting himself upon Christ. Whoever truly desires to be saved from his sins, and looks to Christ for salvation, and would be in charity with all men, may safely come. He who from his heart can say, "God be merciful to me a sinner," needs no other fitness. Let him draw near in faith, and take this Holy Sacrament to his comfort.

XXII.

Thus we confess the Saviour's love,
His last command we thus obey,
Who came in mercy from above,
And died to take our guilt away.

O come! with lively faith partake
This blessed cup, this hallow'd bread;
His body, broken for our sake;
His precious blood, for sinners shed.

With holy joy that love adore,
Which saved us from eternal pain:
How deep the wo for us he bore!
How vast the bliss through him we gain!

And did he pay the costly price,
Our captive spirits to redeem:—
Henceforth, a living sacrifice,
Oh, let us yield ourselves to him!

GOOD FRIDAY.

Christ made an Offering for Sin.

Morning Lessons . .	Genesis xxii. 1—19. St. John xviii.
Evening Lessons . .	Isaiah liii. 1 Peter ii.
Epistle	Hebrews x. 1—25.
Gospel	St. John xix.
Proper Psalms . .	Morning xxii. xl. liv. Evening lxix. lxxxviii.

The services appointed for this day are so clear, that little or no explanation is necessary to understand, and apply them.

The first lesson presents a very distinct type of the death of Christ, in the offering of Isaac; the father offering up his only and well beloved son, and the son submitting, a willing victim. The deliverance of Isaac, after he lay bound and offered upon the altar, represents a resurrection from the dead, from which, says the apostle, Heb. xi. 19, Abraham received him in a figure: and the resemblance is completed by the fact, that our Lord was crucified in the same place where Isaac was offered.

The first evening lesson describes the circumstances of our Lord's humiliation, rejection, sufferings, death, burial, and exaltation. It declares that his sufferings and death were a sacrifice and expiation for our sins; and that by the knowledge of him he should justify his people, having borne their iniquities.

The history of our Lord's Passion, related by St. John, is read to day in its order, and is particularly suitable, for St. John witnessed all that he describes. Among the many reflections which the narrative may suggest, there is one less obvious than the others. Crucifixion is an extremely lingering death, because it inflicts no mortal injury, but wears out life by the slow exhaustion of continued agony. Our Lord expired when he had hung little more than three hours on the cross, a circumstance so unusual, that "Pilate marvelled if he were already dead." Mark xv. 44. His death, therefore, was not the effect of the torture, but his own voluntary act; according to his word, "No man taketh it," his life, "from me, but I lay it down of myself: I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again." St. John x. 18. So, when all things were accomplished, he said, "it is finished; and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost."

Of the proper Psalms, some parts are prophetic, and apply only to the Saviour. Such are his taking away the legal sacrifices, xl. 6—8.; the circumstances of his passion, xxii., and part of lxix.; the judgment upon Jerusalem and the Jews, lxix. 22—28.; the salvation of the world, and the restoration of Israel, xxii. 27—31., lxix. 34—36. Others, as the liv., lxxxviii., and portions of those already quoted, apply also to the afflicted Christian, who is offering up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, to Him that is able to save; or blessing God for the hope of deliverance

and comfort. It is our happiness that Christ took upon him all our infirmities, sin only excepted, that in all things we might be instructed and comforted by his example. "Both he that sanctifieth, and they that are sanctified, are all of one."

The epistle explains the inefficacy of the legal sacrifices, which were only a shadow of good things to come; and the all-sufficiency of the one offering of Christ. It then exhorts us, as we have "boldness, to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus," and have such an high-priest to intercede for us, to draw near with truth, purity, and faith; having in our baptism at once a pledge of the promised blessings, and an emblem of the purity which we covenant on our part to observe. In the faith which he enjoins, the Apostle distinguishes two particulars;—our confidence, grounded upon full assurance in the faithfulness of God, proved in the gift of his Son;—and our duty, to hold fast our profession without wavering, proving, like Abraham, the reality and steadfastness of our faith by resolved obedience. Farther, he exhorts to consider, not ourselves only, but also our brethen; striving, by the active observance of all the public and social duties of religion, to promote the spirituality, fruitfulness, and peace of the church.

These mutual obligations St. Peter enforces in the second evening lesson by a very significant figure: for he represents all Christians as lively stones, built up together into one spiritual temple, Jesus Christ himself being made the head of the corner." Throughout the chapter, he magnifies our privileges, and enforces our duties, as members of Christ's church; and finishes by laying especial stress upon the duty of patient suffering, even though it should be for well-doing; to which he reconciles us, by offering the example of Christ, and urging the many benefits which we obtain from his cross and passion.

The Collects which the church puts into our lips to day, are conceived in this spirit of true charity: and if we can pray, in a temper accordant with the words, for the welfare of the whole Christian Church; for all estates and persons therein; and for the conversion of all enemies of the faith, we may be well assured that our prayers, whatever their effect upon those for whom we offer them, will surely return with a blessing into our own bosom.

XXIII.

Lamb of God, whose dying love
Thus thy saints recall to mind,
Hear, and bless us from above,
Let us now thy mercy find;

Let thy blood, by faith applied,
Every sinner's pardon seal;
All in thee be justified;
Every soul thy comfort feel.

By thine agony of pain,
By thy precious blood, we pray;
Cleanse our hearts from every stain,
Take our load of guilt away:

Burst our bonds and set us free;
Bid our fear and sorrow cease;
O, remember Calvary;
Saviour! bid us go in peace.

EASTER EVEN.

Christians buried with Christ in Baptism.

Morning Lessons	Zechariah ix. St. Luke xxiii. 50—56.
Evening Lessons	Exodus xiii. Hebrews iv.
Epistle	1 Peter iii. 17—22.
Gospel	St. Matt. xxvii. 57—66.

The second morning lesson describes the burial of our Lord; an event of the utmost importance, as it proves that he died in very deed. The gospel relates, in addition, the precautions used by the chief priests to prevent the body from being taken away, and by which they afforded additional confirmation of his glorious resurrection. The other parts of the service apply more particularly to ourselves.

We were captives to Sin and Death; but we are delivered by the blood of the covenant from the miserable dungeon in which we lay; Zech. ix. 9. He who delivered us from the pit, calls us to enter a fortress of safety, "Turn ye to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope!"

The toils and sufferings of our Lord ended with his death. Thenceforth there remained to him but to establish his Church, that stronghold which he maintains; that fold which he guards; and then to enter into his glory. Like him, the faithful, when they die, cease from all their pains. As the second evening lesson shews.

"there remaineth a rest for the people of God." "I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write! from henceforth, blessed are the dead which die in the Lord: even so saith the Spirit; for they rest from their labours."

"Christ hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us unto God; being put to death in the flesh, but quickened in the Spirit." 1 Peter iii. 18. This Spirit was his own Divine power which he had from the beginning; by which, from the foundation of the world, he was the salvation of all who believed, "by which also he went, and preached to the spirits in prison." These were the sinners who perished in the Flood, to whom Christ preached by the mouth of Noah, "a preacher of righteousness," as he now preaches to us by his ministers; ceasing not to warn the disobedient, "while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water." "The like figure whereunto," that is, to the Ark, "even baptism, doth now save us by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." Judgment is declared against the world, 2 Peter iii. 7., and will certainly be executed. An Ark of safety is provided, which is represented by baptism. But that baptism may save us, there must be with the outward and visible sign, the inward and spiritual grace: not merely outward washing, "but the answer of a good conscience towards God." We are baptized into the death of Christ, that we may die with Him to sin; and be buried with him by the continual mortifying of our corrupt affections; in hope that, as he died, and was buried, and rose again, so we shall pass through the grave and gate of death to a joyful resurrection.

Another figure representing our baptism is contained in the first evening lesson. The children of Israel, as we are taught, 1 Cor. x. 2., "were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea." Not that this resemblance consists in their passing through the water; for then the passage of Jordan would present a similar figure; and this is nowhere compared to baptism. It figured the spiritual blessings of the Sacrament. It delivered them from their enemies, whom it destroyed; or, as, it may be fitly expressed, it brought them into a state of salvation; it secured their freedom; it was the first stage of their journey to the promised land; it contained in itself a pledge of sufficient help to make their salvation complete. But whether they should secure, or lose, the promised blessings, depended on their own improvement of the grace that was given. We find a warning, in the sequel to the histories of the family of Noah, saved from the Flood, and of the children of Israel, saved from Egypt. Ham was saved in the Ark, but afterwards fell under his father's curse; and the Israelites through unbelief fell short of the promised rest, and perished in the wilderness.

XXIV.

That holy rite, that solemn vow,
May we its sacred influence know,
Born from above, and kept, and blest:
So passed thy people through the flood;
So, guided by the shadowing cloud
They gained the promised Canaan's rest.

Baptized into the Saviour's death,
Oh, may we die to all beneath,
And live henceforth to him alone:
Serve him with zeal and patience here;
And wait till he, our life, appear,
And raise us to a heavenly throne.

EASTER DAY.

Salvation completed in Christ's victory.

Morning Lessons .	Exodus xii.
	Romans vi.
Evening Lessons .	Exodus xiv.
	Acts ii. 22—47.
Epistle	Colossians iii. 1—7.
Gospel	St. John xx. 1—10.
Proper Psalms . .	Morning ii. lvii. cxi.
	Evening cxiii. cxiv. cxviii.

On this great festival, our attention is called to four points. The types, contained in the lessons from the Old Testament: the facts of the Resurrection, related in the gospel:—the manner in which the doctrine was received and improved by those to whom it was first preached, which is recorded for our example in the second evening lesson:—and the direct application addressed to us, and to all christians, in the second morning lesson, and the epistle. The proper Psalms suggest suitable reflections, and furnish suitable words to express our prayers and thanksgivings.

The morning lesson describes the institution of the Passover, whose application to our Lord,

the very Paschal Lamb, is clear in all its particulars. The victim was to be a lamb without blemish. On the 10th day of the month, he was to be set apart, and it was on this day that Christ made his public entrance into Jerusalem. He was to be slain on the fourteenth day between noon and sunset; the day and hour when our Lord was crucified. A bone of him was not to be broken: compare St. John xix. 36. By his blood sprinkled, the Israelites were saved from death, when the destroying angel passed over to execute judgment upon the Egyptians. The rite was to be commemorated by all the faithful through all their generations, as our Lord hath enjoined us to commemorate his sacrifice of himself. "Christ our passover is sacrificed for us, therefore let us keep the feast."

The evening lesson relates the passage of the Israelites through the Red Sea, and therein affords a lively image of our baptism, whereby we gain a covenanted title to all the benefits of Christ's death and resurrection; as was explained in the service for Easter Even.

The fact of the Resurrection is told in the gospel; a portion, which is chosen with great judgment, because it shews also the unbelief and dullness of the Apostles: who as yet knew not the Scriptures, that Christ must rise from the dead. When therefore we observe the uncertainty which prevailed in the mind of Peter on finding the sepulchre empty, we can explain the confidence with which he speaks in the second evening lesson only by the fact that he afterwards had the fullest proof, as the Scriptures relate, that "the Lord is risen indeed."

The second evening lesson, with a powerful declaration of the fact, and a clear exposition of prophecies relating to it, shews in a very instructive manner how the doctrine was received by those to whom it was preached on the day of Pentecost. They were baptised; and it is added, that they observed the obligations of their baptismal covenant. "They continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." The following verse describes the blessings which attended their faithfulness; and which all branches and members of the Church may also expect, when, holding the truth, and constant in the observances of religion, they are governed in all their conduct by ardent love to God, and fervent charity to man.

Our own duties are set forth in the second morning lesson, and the epistle. The former, Rom. xi., explains the nature, benefit, and obligations of baptism, in making us partakers of the death and resurrection of Christ; and offers a powerful chain of reasoning against the heresy which would presume upon the grace of God, as if it afforded a licence to sin. It shews that, on the contrary, the seal of the Covenant of life which delivers us from the slavery of sin, and its awful wages, death, obliges, as it enables us, to live to God, bringing forth fruit unto holiness. The epistle accords thereto. Assuming that we are dead to sin, and risen with Christ, it exhorts to set our affections on things above, and to mortify our sensual and earthly dispositions. The exhortation is one; for a heart set upon treasures in heaven will scarce rest upon the earth; and if we dwell with delight upon the holiness of heaven, how can we turn away from its purity to wallow in sensuality.

The appropriate character of the Psalms will immediately appear. Psalm ii. celebrates the exaltation and triumph of Messiah: lvii., the troubles through which he passed to it: cxi., God's faithfulness to his covenant, and the redemption He hath sent unto his people: cxiii., praises Him for his goodness, and foretells his universal dominion and the calling of the Gentiles: cxiv., celebrates the deliverance of Israel from Egypt: and cxviii., completes the service, with a hymn of joy and thanksgiving for the triumph he hath achieved, and the salvation he hath wrought; to be offered on the Lord's own day, and in his house, when we go to his altar as the church requires that we do on this day; to praise him, "who by his death hath destroyed death, and by his rising to life again hath restored to us everlasting life."

XXV.

When Israel forth from Egypt went,
And Jacob left the stranger's land,
God's glory shadow'd Judah's tent,
And Israel own'd her Monarch's hand.

The sea beheld his power, and fled:
Back to her source was Jordan driven:
The trembling mountains shook with dread:
From their strong base the hills were riven.

O sea! what fears compell'd thy flight—
Why, Jordan, did thy floods retreat—
Why moved the hills—and whence the fright
That shook the mountains from their seat?

Tremble, thou earth, when God appears!
Before the face of Jacob's God!
Whose power the flinty rock declares,
And melting, pours the gushing flood.
5th Proper Psalm, CXIV.

XXVI.

Why should we shrink at Nature's doom,
That turns us back to clay;
And tremble at the awful tomb,
And shudder at decay?

A sure and certain hope is ours,
Which we through Christ obtain;
Clothed with immortal life, and powers,
Our dust shall rise again!

Rise, when the trump of God shall sound,
And death yield up his prey:
But where, my soul, shall I be found,
In that tremendous day!

Now, while I feel this mortal strife,
Be all my sins forgiven:
Then, death shall prove the gate of life;
The grave, my road to heaven.

MONDAY IN EASTER WEEK.

God's people nourished and defended.

Morning Lessons .	Exodus xvi.
	St. Matthew xxviii.
Evening Lessons .	Exodus xvii.
	Acts iii.
For the Epistle .	Acts x. 34—43.
Gospel	St. Luke xxiv. 13—35.

The morning lesson describes the gift of manna; the evening lesson, that of water from the rock at Horeb: both being types of the nourishment we should receive from Christ, and of our daily dependence upon him. No store of manna was given to be hoarded. The provision for the day was to be gathered every morning. We must seek with daily solicitude those spiritual blessings which the manna prefigured; the living bread which is the nourishment and life of our souls. "Give us this day our daily bread."

The Israelites "did all eat of the same spiritual meat, and did all drink of the same spiritual drink, for they drank of that spiritual rock which followed them, and that rock was Christ." Our Lord applies these types to himself, and shews that his disciples must be nourished and live by him. After the miracle of the loaves, St. John vi., he explained, that he is the living bread which cometh down from heaven, of which, if a man eat, he shall live for ever: and he declares himself the source and giver of that living water, of which, if a man drink, he shall never thirst; St. John iv. 10—14., and vii. 37—39. May we so feed upon him in our hearts, by faith, with thanksgiving, that being made partakers of his life, we may look without dismay to the end of our mortal existence; knowing that, "when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory."

The second morning lesson contains two very important facts; the Resurrection; and the means whereby we obtain its benefit. Christ, being risen from the dead, declares his power to the Apostles; commissions them to disciple all nations; appoints Christian baptism, the image of his own death and resurrection, as the means whereby they express their faith, and become members of his Church; requires obedience to all his commands, as the duty they are to perform; and promises that his presence shall bless and support his ministers "always, even to the end of the world:" a promise, which, like his prayer, St. John xvii. 20., extends through them whom he personally addressed, to their successors in all ages. The Angel of God's presence brought the Israelites out of Egypt, guided, nourished, and saved, them. So we, brought out of the house of bondage at our baptism, are led by the Spirit, and nourished with Christ's word and sacraments; which his ministers, the angels of his holy catholic and apostolic Church, dispense by his authority, in his name, and with his power.

The second evening lesson shews the apostles acting upon this their commission, by preaching the Resurrection to the Jews, to whom the offer of life in Christ was first to be made, confirming the doctrine with signs and miracles. The epistle shews the partition wall between Jews and Gentiles broken down, and the

doctrine of the Resurrection brought, by divine appointment, to the Gentiles; whose equal title to all its blessings, as fellow heirs with the children of Abraham, is visibly confirmed by the Holy Ghost, and thereupon ratified by baptism.

The Gospel is very significant of the benefits of the Holy Communion. The hearts of the disciples had burned within them on their journey to Emmaus, while Christ talked with them by the way, and while he opened to them the Scriptures; but it was "in the breaking of bread" that "he was known of them." Oh that all they who call themselves his disciples would not think it enough to come to his table now and then, as if it were a mere act of profession; but duly prizing this holy privilege, and the blessings which the faithful obtain thereby, would joyfully obey every call to feast with their Divine Master on earth, as they hope in heaven to be called to the marriage supper of the Lamb. The invitation of an earthly Prince is a command; but men trifle with the invitations of the King of Glory.

In our journey through the desert, as the evening lesson teaches, we shall need, with nourishment to sustain us, help to overcome our spiritual enemies. Amalek will come and fight against Israel; and if we would conquer, Joshua must fight, and Moses must pray. Exertion without prayer; prayer without exertion; neither will avail us. We must contend, as if all depended upon our own efforts; while we lift up holy hands, without ceasing, and without doubting, to Him by whom we shall obtain the victory. Then shall we overcome, through the Lord, our banner.

XXVII.

O God, unseen, yet ever near,
Thy presence may we feel;
And thus, inspired with holy fear,
Before thine altar kneel.

Here may thy faithful people know
The blessings of thy love;
The streams that through the desert flow,
The manna from above.

We come, obedient to thy word,
To feast on heavenly food;
Our meat, the body of the Lord;
Our drink, his precious blood.

Thus would we all thy words obey,
For we, O God, are thine;
And go rejoicing on our way,
Renew'd with strength divine.

TUESDAY IN EASTER WEEK.

Judgment for them who despise Salvation.

Morning Lessons . .	Exodus xx.
	St. Luke xxiv. 1—12.
Evening Lessons . .	Exodus xxxii.
	1 Corinthians xv.
For the Epistle . .	Acts xiii. 26—41.
Gospel	St. Luke xxiv. 36—48.

The subject of the Resurrection is completed in this day's services; of which the second morning lesson repeats the fact, as related by St. Luke; while the gospel, taken out of the same chapter, supplies an additional circumstance, in our Lord's eating before his disciples after his resurrection: thus proving the affirmation in the fourth Article, that "Christ did truly rise again from death, and took again his body, with flesh, bones, and all things pertaining to the perfection of man's nature." In the second evening lesson, the Apostle asserts the Resurrection of Christ, and applies it to establish the certainty of our own; which he proves by conclusive arguments, and explains, as far as such a mysterious subject can admit, by familiar illustrations.

The first morning lesson describes the giving of the Law from Sinai. The evening lesson relates the sin of the Golden Calf, and Moses' noble and affectionate intercession for the offending people. It requires no fanciful interpretation to apply all these things to ourselves, seeing that they happened for ensamples, and are written for our admonition. We wonder at the infatuation of the Israelites in turning aside to idolatry, while God's power and glory were visibly displayed before them, forgetting how continually we set up idols in our own hearts. Moses prayed that he might be blotted out of God's book, if thereby his people might be forgiven: Christ actually bore the curse for us. The prayer of Moses had power with God: how effectual must be the intercession

of our Advocate and Mediator! But Moses, who was ready to die for his people, yet passed sentence upon the guilty, and executed judgment by the sword of the sons of Levi: and Christ, our Redeemer and Intercessor, is also the Judge, who will come to condemn all who despised his salvation!

This truth is represented in the epistle; which contains St. Paul's address to the Jews of Antioch in Pisidia, to whom he preached the Resurrection, ending his discourse with an awful warning of the perdition which should be the lot of all who refuse the offer of life; "Behold ye despisers, and wonder, and perish." By referring to the latter portion of the chapter, we shall find that he solemnly condemned them for their unbelief, and left them to their impenitence.

The Gospel is the word of life to as many as receive it; but them who reject its offers, it sinks to deeper condemnation. "He that despised Moses' Law, died without mercy .... of how much sorer punishment .... shall he be thought worthy who hath trodden under foot the Son of God!" Our Lord himself declared of those who had seen his mighty works, yet believed not, that it should be more tolerable for Sodom in the day of Judgment than for them!

XXVIII.

Wo to the Earth, when God shall rise,
And pour his judgments down
On all who dared his love despise,
Nor trembled at his frown!

But who, in that tremendous day,
Shall meet the Judge severe!
When Heaven and Earth shall pass away,
Oh, how shall I appear!

Saviour of men! thy grace is sure;
Beneath thy Cross I'll lie;
I know that refuge shall endure,
When Time and Nature die.

To save me from the sinner's doom,
I cast myself on thee;
And when with glory thou shalt come,
O Lord, remember me!

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

The Church of Christ.

Morning Lesson . .	Numbers xvi.
Evening Lesson . .	Numbers xxii.
Epistle	1 John v. 4—12.
Gospel	St. John xx. 19—23

We learn to-day the character, faith, and privileges of those who constitute the Church, having by baptism put on Christ; the authority with which Christ hath invested those whom he appoints to govern it; the guilt of intruding into their office; and the danger against which Christians, Ministers, and Churches ought particularly to guard.

It was the practice in the Ancient Church to baptize chiefly at the festivals of the Epiphany, when our Lord's baptism was commemorated; Easter, because of the doctrine figured in baptism, of our death and resurrection with Christ; and Whitsuntide, for the spiritual blessings conveyed in and through this Sacrament by the Holy Ghost. On this day, the octave of Easter, those who had been baptized on Easter Even laid aside the white garments which had been put upon them, and which were preserved in the churches, to be produced against them, if they should violate their baptismal vow. To this vow the Collect refers; in which they plead the death and resurrection of Christ, in imploring God's help so to put away the leaven of malice and wickedness, that they may always serve Him in pureness of living and truth.

The Epistle declares their glorious privilege; to be the sons of God: the effect thereof; that they overcome the world: the means whereby they achieve their victory; faith: the nature of their faith; a firm and practical belief in the Trinity in Unity: the witnesses which confirm it to their hearts; the water of baptism, the blood of redemption, and the spirit of sanctification, which three agree in one: their final hope and reward; eternal life, which God hath given to us in Christ, and in him only.

The gospel declares the authority which Christ hath given to those whom he sets over his Church: their mission; sent forth into the world by him, as he himself by the Father:

their power; the Holy Ghost abiding in them: their office; to govern as Christ's ministers and representatives, having power and authority to declare and pronounce to his people, being penitent, the absolution and remission of their sins; and also to inflict upon offenders the censure of the Church, even to the extent of exclusion from its privileges. It is one, and a very serious evil of schism, that it brings ecclesiastical discipline into contempt; for they who spurn at the Church will mock at her authority: but neither the low tone, nor the mistakes of public opinion, nor yet the laxity nor the interference of human laws, can invalidate the commission of Christ's ministers, nor weaken the force of his declaration, "He that despiseth you, despiseth me, and he that despiseth me, despiseth Him that sent me."

When we regard the awful and extensive powers committed to the Christian ministry, we may understand why "it is not lawful for any man to take upon himself the office, before he be lawfully called and sent to execute the same." The sin of such presumptuous intrusion is shown by the morning lesson in the crime and punishment of Korah: and as St. Jude denounces wo against such as oppose authorities after the gainsaying of Korah, verse 11, we are sure, that to despise and resist lawful ministers, and intrude into their office, thereby to violate the unity, disturb the peace, and weaken the authority of God's church, which was the crime of that notorious culprit, is equally an offence under the Gospel.

When Korah intruded himself into the Priesthood against Aaron, his confederates Dathan and Abiram revolted against Moses. Schism and rebellion are twin brothers. They said, "Ye take too much upon you, seeing that all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them: wherefore, then, lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the Lord?" True demagogues, they contended for equality, that they might pull down the existing government, and so make a way for themselves to power.

The evening lesson, in the example of Balaam, warns the Church against covetousness; the sin which has always been the most fatal to her purity. It teaches also the danger of opposing whom God protects. The history of this criminal, and his progressive steps in guilt, till, baffled in his attempts to earn his reward by cursing Israel, he lent himself to seduce them, and his miserable end, are full of instruction. The whole will be considered with deep interest by all, who, knowing the deceitfulness of their hearts, search diligently the Scriptures with prayer and thoughtfulness, that they may understand their errors, and be cleansed from their secret faults.

XXIX.

Pardon'd through redeeming grace,
In thy blessed Son reveal'd;
Worshipping before thy face,
Lord, to thee ourselves we yield.

Thou the sacrifice receive,
Humbly offer'd through thy Son;
Quicken us in him to live;
Lord, in us thy will be done.

By the hallow'd outward sign,
By the cleansing grace within,
Seal, and make us wholly thine,
Wash, and keep us pure from sin.

Call'd to bear the christian name,
May our vows and life accord;
And our ev'ry deed proclaim
"Holiness unto the Lord."

XXX.

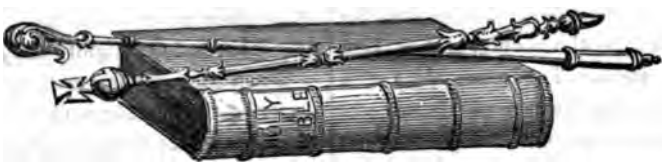
Your hearts and tongues, ye saints, employ
To hymn the praises of your God;
Sing the vast blessings you enjoy,
The purchase of the Saviour's blood.

Salvation for defence is given;
God is your everlasting stay;
Your blessing is the peace of heaven;
And holiness your shining way.

The fear of death, the curse of sin,
Shall vex your ransom'd souls no more;
For God's good Spirit works within,
With light, and purity, and power.

Soft as the dew shall grace descend,
Your drooping spirits to sustain;
And, when your mortal life shall end,
You'll wake to bliss with Christ to reign.

CHURCH AND KING.



"FEAR GOD—HONOUR THE KING."

No. VII. APRIL 1, 1837.

THE CHURCH AND DISSENT,

CONSIDERED IN THEIR PRACTICAL INFLUENCE.

CHAPTER VII.

The Church and Dissent, their influence on the National Character.

THE conditions of national greatness are found in a people intelligent, thoughtful, and religious; united in themselves; and offering a cheerful obedience to their rulers;—and in rulers, governing with a wise, temperate, and firm authority. It has been shewn already how the Church promotes the individual and social virtues of the people. Her influence on the principles of government is yet to be explained.

The principles of government are not left in uncertainty. The Bible declares expressly that God himself has committed to rulers their authority, to govern as accountable to Him, and by all men to be obeyed for conscience sake. "Let every soul be subject to the higher powers; for there is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever, therefore, resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God," &c. Rom. xiii. 1—7. Again, "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake; whether it be to the King, as supreme, or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by Him for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God," &c. 1 Peter ii. 13—17.

It is not required to prove what none can deny without disputing the Bible. All that is necessary, is to shew that this principle is essential to the welfare of the people: a fact, which again cannot be doubted, since the authority which God ordains to represent his own must be given as a blessing.

All experience proves that there must, and will be a ruler; and the only question is, who gives him his authority, and to whom is he accountable,—God, or the people. Regarded as God's vicegerent, his government rests upon a fixed and secure principle. He rules as the protector of ALL: for God has committed all to his charge. Party struggles scarcely effect him, whose favour it is the great object of party to gain; and he who has nothing to desire or fear, can have no temptation to be unjust. He will not compromise the interests of his kingdom, for they are in all things his own. The honour and strength of the nation centre in the Throne; and invest it with such majesty, and power, as to check the most presumptuous ambition, and restrain the most daring faction. The personal relation he bears to every subject, gives them all an interest in his glory and virtue, as their King, and father. How exalted was the veneration, how ardent the affection, we cherished for our good King George III.! With what pleasure we looked forward to his birth-day, and celebrated it as a general festival! With what a thrill of delight we heard, or joined in the national anthem! The courage

of England rose higher, when sustained by his firmness; and virtue itself seemed more excellent, when enforced by his example!

Far different is the ruler, who receives his power as a trust from the people, and is held accountable to them. The mere chief of a party, he must regard the rest of his subjects as enemies. The strength of his government being only that of a majority, which circumstances may destroy, his first object must be to confirm his interest, though at the expense of the nation. Is he a military usurper? He must gratify the army. Has he gained his elevation by intrigue? He must abandon the country to his faction. No matter that their private objects are incompatible with the public welfare, their support is required, and they must be gratified at whatever cost. No matter that the institutions which thwart their selfish designs are the excellency and glory of the nation; they must be modified, or overturned. No matter that the opposition includes the most excellent and distinguished among the people. If they refuse to submit, they must, if possible, be crushed or degraded.

Such a government, whether the executive be an usurping king, or an anti-national and selfish ministry, *must* be weak; and a weak and unprincipled government will be corrupt, and tyrannical, and partial, and unjust:—corrupt, to bribe adherents; tyrannical, in proceeding vindictively against opponents; partial, to screen delinquent friends; unjust, in substituting power for the law. These are facts too self-evident to require proof; nor is it necessary to go back to history for an illustration.

So exalted is the kingly office, that no personal qualities; no reputation, however splendid; no talents, success, or fame, may compare with it. If the dignity of a sovereign could be sustained by personal superiority, none would rank higher than Cromwell, and Napoleon. Yet neither could represent the majesty of a lawful throne; and each would have been far greater in his proper sphere, as the faithful and honoured servant of his King. In forcing themselves to an elevation not their own, they became stained with crime, and degraded with meanness. How despicable is the hypocrisy of the one, and the vanity of the other; vices to which they would have had no temptation, had they remained in their own place; and which they never would have stooped to, had they inherited the dignity they usurped.

When the people arrogate to themselves power to sit in judgment on their sovereign; when they dare to represent him as accountable to them; when they reason and act as if his interests were opposed to theirs, and his power and dignity abridged their own, they are false to themselves. The King represents the majesty of the nation; and it is to the honour of the people that his dignity should be exalted to the uttermost. He is their defender; and their security is that power which he must derive from their hearty obedience. In him the law is personified; and to weaken his authority, is to destroy the safeguards of social order, to the encouragement of factious demagogues. And who are these gods, who would exalt themselves at the expense of the Crown? The wise, the honourable, the good? Oh, no! Conscience, integrity, even pride, forbid them to desire such distinction. But the vain, and the unprincipled; men of desperate fortunes, who would retrieve them, though by the ruin of their country; and bankrupts in character, who would be shunned by the lowest, if their sins were not cloaked by party. Let them possess but the qualities for a mob-leader, fluency, impudence, and just a smattering of knowledge to teach them to cavil, and they require nothing more. The trade of a patriot may entirely dispense with character. A man, whom no vice can blacken, no infamy sink, no exposure shame, as soon as he proclaims himself "a patriot," forthwith becomes worthy of all confidence. So should it be. It is just that they, who in their pride and folly, refuse to obey the authority which God appoints, should create their own punishment, in becoming voluntary slaves to the basest of men. So the Jews, when they revolted against God, set up calves to worship, and cried, "These be thy gods, O Israel!"

Every institution appointed generally for mankind, must possess a self-regulating principle. Accordingly, the sovereign power contains a check against the abuse of it, in ministerial responsibility; which, instead of

being, as commonly supposed, a part of constitutional government, exists in the most perfect despotism. The direct personal influence of any individual is so limited, that the power of the King must be exercised through subordinate agents. These ministers are doubly interested in restraining his tyranny; for, while they are themselves the most directly exposed to it, they would be the first victims of a people roused by oppression. The despot himself protects the people against the cruelty of petty tyrants; who again save the multitude from the more fatal tyranny of one another. Where moral restraint would fail, power must coerce. A rapacious and cruel despotism can exist, only where the rights of property and life are not understood; but there, no man would be safe from his neighbour for a day, were it not for a superior control. Even among robbers, the captive traveller would feel himself safest near the chief. As nations become intelligent, fixed laws gradually, and necessarily, take place of caprice, and violence. These, by their definite character, limit the authority they give, and constitute at once the power of the sovereign, and the security of the people.

Should grievances exist, or encroachments on liberty be attempted, there are constitutional and adequate means of redress, consistent with perfect loyalty to the King. He is accountable to God, who gave his authority, and to Him only. As the inhabitants of a colony would not be justified in resisting the tyranny of a governor by revolt, because they ought to seek redress from the justice of their common sovereign, so a nation is required to do right, relying on the protection of the King of Kings. No circumstance can excuse, for none can ever need a crime. God, in whose hand are the issues of all things, and the lives of all men, is Himself the protector, and avenger of the people. To usurp this power is to rebel against His authority, and practically to deny His providence and goodness; as if He were careless of their welfare, for whose sake He hath appointed Kings to reign. "Who can stretch forth his hand against the Lord's anointed, and be guiltless? As the Lord liveth, the Lord shall smite him; or his day shall come to die; or he shall descend into battle and perish." (1 Samuel xxvi. 9, 10.)

Reasoning upon the lowest human motives, rebellion never can be necessary, and therefore is never to be justified. Far less than the power required to overturn a Throne, would be sufficient to obtain full redress for any grievance by constitutional means.

If the King should command what the laws of God forbid, the subject ought to disobey; but yet, for conscience sake, to submit to the penalty. So a child must not break the laws of the land in obedience to a parent, yet should bear, with all filial submission, the punishment which his father may inflict on him for refusing. This conduct is enjoined as a duty, and all experience proves it to be wise.

The three Jewish champions at the fiery furnace, and Daniel at the den of lions, acted thus; and God displayed his approval by the miracle that saved them. Thus the early Christians submitted to dreadful persecutions, not only while they were few, and weak, but also, and avowedly for conscience sake, when they had become strong enough to resist. By this conduct, they made Christianity the religion of the Roman Empire.

Upon the same principle, the Reformers of England submitted in the reign of Queen Mary; and their constancy in suffering for the Truth was soon rewarded by the overthrow of Popery.

The Church of England acted upon the same principle in the reign of James II.; and her crown of reward was the speedy establishment of the religion and liberties of the Empire.

But treason and rebellion, estimated by their consequences, are of all crimes the most atrocious, of all follies the most extravagant. Terrible have been the calamities when they have failed; more terrible, if possible, where they have been cursed with success.

The Reformation had been established in France; for the Huguenots already numbered more than 2000 congregations. They were in effect tolerated, and their future sovereign was among their leaders. Impatient for supremacy, they attempted to make their king a prisoner, that, in his name, they might put down their enemies by force. They failed: and the civil war which followed, and the

horrible treachery which exterminated them, were but a small part of the consequences of their crime. France, as a Protestant nation, under Henry IV., united with England under Elizabeth, might, by moral influence alone, have established the cause of truth and freedom throughout Europe; but popish and infidel France has from that time been the scourge and curse of the world.

The Covenanters of Scotland asserted what they deemed the rights of conscience by murder, and rebellion; and the miserable calamities they incurred need not be related. In proof that it was only their determined treason which brought down on them the vengeance of the Government, it will be sufficient to state, that at that very time the Quakers were promoting tenets still more offensive: but, doing so upon Christian principles, they obtained, first toleration, and at last favour.

Successful rebellions have been, if possible, still more calamitous. The treason of the Duke of Lancaster established him without opposition upon the throne; but it ended in civil wars, which cut off his posterity, and desolated England. The traitors in the Great Rebellion won all that they fought for; but the only fruit of their crime was to set up a military despot, in place of the King they murdered, and to annihilate their party; till of all their power and triumph, nothing remained but the record of their infamy. The French established the sovereignty of the people; and now, after fifty years of unparalleled crime and misery, we see them coerced by the sword, and saved only by despotism from the horrors of renewed anarchy.

Thus the great truth, that the sovereign power is appointed by God himself, to represent his own authority, and to be obeyed for conscience sake; a truth upon which the prosperity and happiness of nations depend, yet which man, in his pride and folly, is so prone to dispute, is enforced by the strongest declarations of Scripture, and confirmed by the most awful lessons of experience. So clear and forcible have been these lessons, that we see men, who certainly have no moral scruples on the subject, unless personal cowardice should be so considered, deprecating rebellion as the most certain means of defeating a treasonable object.

It is scarcely necessary to add, that these are the principles of the Church; which maintains, not, as her enemies affirm, "passive obedience and non-resistance," but obedience in subordination to the law of God, and passive resistance where that law would be broken by obeying. This principle is stated in the 37th Article, recognized in every part of her services, and illustrated in all her history. In fact, it is identical with her own constitution; for a divinely commissioned ministry rests its authority on the same ground as a divinely appointed sovereignty: —that is, that God is the source of power, and not the people. The greatness which belongs to every thing connected with the Church, makes the lesson easy, by presenting to each disciple such lofty standards of comparison as may impress him with a modest estimate of himself.

Dissent regards the kingly office, and the obedience it claims, as questions of mere expediency; believing that kings hold their office in trust from the people, and as accountable to them. This is the republican principle, which overturned the monarchy at the Great Rebellion, and would certainly lead to the same result wherever it might prevail. How it is to be reconciled with the Bible it is for them to explain. They are at least consistent in avowing it; for they act upon it in their church government; putting their ministers into the same dependent position in which this principle would place the king. Their own condition may shew what would be the effect of carrying their principles into the State. When the power is claimed and exercised by the multitude, the lowest are tempted to pull down all dignities to their own level. In such a system, every thing will be little, because everything must be brought within the narrowest comprehension. This again confirms the principle in the minds of its followers, by strengthening that debasing self-sufficiency which is the very soul of democracy: a feeling, arising from ignorance, and intolerance, of anything greater than itself; which, preventing them from suspecting their own deficiency, prompts them to

decide where they are incompetent to judge, and to covet what they are unequal to sustain.

The anxiety to reduce the Church to their own level, which, among other motives, has made dissenters the active promoters of movement politics, is perhaps too natural to be much complained of. But it cannot be regarded as a christian principle; and it places them in discreditable contrast to the Episcopal Church of Scotland, and to the Wesleyan Methodists. None, however, but themselves, can question the disloyal tendency of their prominent argument in vindication of Dissent; an argument which is usually, if not always, dwelt upon at the ordination, so called, of their ministers; —that, independent of all specific objection, Christians ought to resist the Church, because she is upheld by the State. Such a plea, instead of justifying schism, superadds to it the guilt of disloyalty. They who make a point and principle of resisting an institution because the State supports it, will not thus become better subjects.

The blessings of dutiful obedience are well illustrated in the advantages of naval and military discipline: and the curse of the independent principle, in the calamities which arise from the neglect of it. The effects of the two principles are displayed in the well-known shipwrecks of the Alceste and Meduse; and the contrast has been often dwelt on as a just subject of national pride. But the superiority of an English crew, whether in action, shipwreck, or general service, is greatly attributable to the principle of respectful obedience to superiors, which prevails so generally, that it may be deemed a national trait. To the same cause must be referred that anomalous fact, the cowardice of an English mob. In France, a mob will contend fearlessly and successfully against a little army. An English mob of tens of thousands is scattered like sheep at the charge of a few soldiers. Yet, form a regiment of these fugitives, and oppose them to an enemy, and, as at Albuera and Waterloo, they will keep their ground till they fall to the last man. That feeling must be very strong which can thus make men cowards, when opposed to lawful authority, who are invincible in a good cause. It is a most honourable feeling; and whether it be ascribed to the influence of the Church, or not, it certainly depends upon those principles which the Church, as well by her system, as by her direct instructions, most especially inculcates; and to which all the system and principles of Dissent are entirely opposed.

The influence of literature, though it might have been considered in its bearing upon personal character, belongs more properly to this division of the subject; for the character of the Country depends greatly upon that of its leaders, and theirs is formed by education. The aristocracy, deriving their honours from the King, yet having a common interest with their fellow-subjects, stand between the Throne and the people, upholding the dignity of the one, and protecting the rights of the other. Their position thus enables them to maintain the just balance of constitutional power; and to assert with effect the liberties of the nation, whether against the tyranny of a king, as at Runnymede, or the tyranny of demagogues, as now. To qualify them for these high duties, requires the stern discipline of a superior education, which shall allow them little leisure for vice and frivolity in youth, and train them, by severe and honourable labours, for the business of manhood. Nor is this more essential to the Peer, than to gentlemen who will be called to serve their Country in whatever prominent and influential station; in the Lower House of Parliament, as magistrates, or in the higher walks of the learned professions. Our Universities alone can afford such an education; and they derive their usefulness, and high character entirely from the clergy.

For not only are the attainments required in candidates for the ministry fixed at a high standard, but the success of individuals through life depends much on the degree to which they exceed this standard. The whole system presents the strongest inducement to exertion, by offering prizes, which the most powerful talent can hope to win, only by a long course of determined application. Beginning from childhood, the promising boy at a grammar-school is encouraged to excel, that he may gain a presentation to College, which he knows may be a provision for life. This object attained, stronger motives are

offered in distinguished University honours, which, with character and prudence, surely lead to dignity and success. The effect is a generous emulation, which is every year raising the standard of learning, not so much because the tutors and examiners strive to force it higher, as that the exertions of the students make it necessary to increase the difficulty of the examination. It is in these noble schools, where only learning and character confer distinction, that the sons of nobles and kings complete their education, with the sons of peasants for competitors. Every profession numbers among its chief ornaments those who were most distinguished at the University. Among our present public men, Sir Robert Peel gave the first pledge of his splendid career, by winning the highest honours at Oxford; Lords Lyndhurst, and Langdale, at Cambridge. Whatever may have been the natural abilities of these eminent persons, their power, and practical value, must have been immeasurably increased by the severe discipline of their education. For what stability, what force, what energy, the mind acquires, when it gives its whole attention to a great object of most difficult attainment, and pursues it, with a fixed singleness of purpose, through the whole course of boyhood and youth. The gain to the Country, be it observed, is not confined to the individual who succeeds. It extends also to the numbers, whose exertions deserved the success, of which only the superior talents of another deprived them.

Descending from Statesmen, and the first men in every profession, to the educated classes generally, we find that they still depend upon the clergy; necessarily, for no other persons who would devote themselves to the task of instruction combine high personal consideration with extensive learning. The clergyman exalts the employment by his character. In other hands, the office would be such, that respectable and competent persons would not undertake it; for who, in the position and with the feelings of a gentleman, would incur the labour and expense of an University education, that he might be a schoolmaster all his life? Need it be shewn how much the Country would suffer, if the middling and higher classes were educated by men, whose attainments were superficial, and whose character was not respectable? "The money you demand for educating my son would buy a slave for him," said the father to the philosopher. "Buy him the slave," was the reply, "and then you will have two."

Literature is almost essential to the liberties and religion of a nation. Where learning is undervalued among the laity, the clergy will naturally avail themselves of the power which knowledge must always exercise over ignorance, and usurp in the State the place of the nobles and gentry. Wherever the clergy thus take the lead in political and secular affairs, the king will be despotic, the clergy intriguing, the nobles petty tyrants, and the people slaves.

The system of the Church promotes learning, because the clergyman is tried by the first scholars and divines of the age. The system of Dissent is in the last degree unfavourable to learning, because the dissenting minister is judged by a low and ignorant assemblage. Who are the scholars of Dissent, and how are they made?

A lad, who has made himself conspicuous by taking a prominent part in the Sunday-school, assisting at prayer-meetings, and preaching in the villages; who deems the gratification he feels in these small distinctions, and the irksomeness of the duty which he neglects for them, to imply a "call to the ministry," and perhaps whose circumstances make even the miserable condition of a dissenting minister apparently an improvement,—is admitted, on the recommendation of the "church" to which he belongs, into an Academy. He enters, undisciplined by previous habits of study, generally ignorant even of the rudiments of classical learning, and utterly unacquainted with its scope and use; and he remains, at the utmost, four years. But it must not be supposed that this time is devoted wholly to study. He is employed to preach in neighbouring villages;* and when destitute Meetings can-

* *Independent Academy, at Idle, in Yorkshire.*

"The Annual Report of this Institution (for 1817) states, that the number of students has been considerably increased, there having been fifteen in it during part of the last year. Five have

not immediately procure a satisfactory minister, the general resource is to have a student from the Academy; an arrangement which often terminates his studies prematurely, by leading to a permanent engagement. Even at the Academy, literature is a secondary object. His ambition is directed rather to be the eloquent declaimer, than the sound scholar: for he knows that his reputation and success will depend, not upon his learning, but his popular pulpit abilities. Under such a system, a scholar can be made only by those rare accidents, where talent compensates for the deficiency of education, and taste for the absence of all encouragement. The tutors themselves have been educated in the same way; unless they should have been so happy as to have passed through a Scotch University, and thus obtained from an ecclesiastical establishment, advantages which their own system cannot afford.

The position which England occupies among the nations, and the extent of her power and influence, are well calculated to awaken the most serious reflections. In herself but an inconsiderable island, she has become the deliverer of Europe, the mistress of Asia, the parent of America, the protector of Africa, the sovereign of the Ocean, the arbiter of the World. This magnificent empire can be secured only by the sovereignty of moral influence; and none can be so effectual as that of the Church. What Jerusalem was to the Jews; what Rome has been to the Papists; England may be to Protestants. Every reformed Episcopal Church is a fortress of British power. Wherever this faith prevails, be it in a Colony, there will the sovereignty of England be established in the love and respect of the people: in a Sovereign State, there will be assured peace, cordiality, and confidence. Our Colonies, on every Continent, and in every part of the Sea, afford the means of establishing it throughout the world; and dwelling as we may with pride on the greatness and glories of our empire, we shall do well to consider seriously why God has committed to us so great a charge! We neglected the duty of establishing the Church in our old North American Colonies, and as a direct consequence and punishment, we lost them. The immediate cause of hostilities would never have created a difference, had there not previously existed a strong principle of discord. Mr. Wesley declares, from personal observation, that very many years before the revolt of these Colonies, there was a disposition to throw off their dependence upon England, founded, not upon any alleged grievance, but upon the feeling of repulsion which necessarily exists against monarchy, wherever the system of Independency in religion prevails. Severe trials are evidently in reserve for that Country. The rival interests of the different States, the fearful slave question, and the inadequacy of the supreme authority to control such a population, almost forbid the hope that all will be quietly adjusted: but it may be predicted with confidence, that whenever the day of trial for America shall come, the Episcopal Church, limited as it yet is, will be found the ark of her safety. *

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accepted invitations to take the charge of congregations."

The Report states, that "after the young men have pursued their studies with patient assiduity, at the close of every week they have laid aside their books, and cheerfully guided themselves to perform their fatiguing journeys far and near, for the purpose of serving our churches and congregations by the discharge of ministerial duties. Like apostolic men, they have travelled on foot; and, in the course of the last twelve months, the miles they have travelled, when added together, make a total exceeding 17,400."—*Evangelical Magazine.*

* So much of party feeling is connected with the question of religion in America, that extreme caution is necessary in receiving any statements on the subject. Indeed, the author of a volume lately published, "New England, and her Institutions," offers an estimate of the numbers belonging to each sect; and makes the aggregate six millions more than the whole population of the United States.

But the question of numbers is unimportant, when compared with that of the *character* of the religion which prevails. Upon this part of the subject, the evidence leads to a very painful conclusion,—that sound religious principles have but a limited influence in the United States; for that Infidelity prevails greatly among the more educated classes, and dangerous enthusiasm through the greater part of the religious world.

Upon the first point, omitting all reference to the notorious prevalence and influence of Socinianism in the chief towns of the Northern States, I shall allude only to the trial, defence, and acquittal of

The influence of Democracy is not confined to politics. It extends to Christian truth; it extends to personal morals; and is utterly destructive to both. So surely as resistance to a delegated power is rebellion against the supreme government, so surely to assert the soverignty of the people is to usurp God's authority. Nor is there a crime which brings down more awful judgments. A false and wicked principle, once admitted, be that principle what it may, will surely advance, unless controlled by other influences, even to its last extreme of error, and of evil. But no errors, and no evils are comparable to those which flow from this treason against the Divine Majesty. That vain self-sufficiency, which

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Dr. Cooper, Principal of the College of South Carolina.

Dr. Cooper, in his publications, had maintained such extreme infidelity, in language so revolting for its profaneness, that it attracted public attention; as well it might, when the Principal of a College, or, indeed, any man, could speak of the Pentateuch in terms like the following:—

"Do not the books themselves afford sufficient evidence that they are unworthy of the countenance of any intelligent being? Is not the book of Genesis a collection of absurd and frivolous tales? I wish the epithets absurd and frivolous were the worst that might fairly be applied; but they are not." He then proceeds to ridicule the contents of the following books in language still more offensive; too much so, indeed, to be quoted.

After two years from the time when the subject had been generally discussed, Dr. C. was put upon his trial before the Trustees of the College, December 5, 1832; the charges being generally,—that his opinions were offensive to large classes of the people, and to the parents of the young men in particular; and that they were calculated to injure the prosperity of the College. Dr. Cooper's defence contained a full avowal of his opinions, with the assertion of his right to maintain them. He contended that "every opinion complained of had long been held by large classes of the most respectable citizens of the United States;" and he proved that, after he had been publicly accused of holding them, the applications for admission into the College had greatly increased. "During the course of Dr. Cooper's speech, the plaudits of the multitude who attended as auditors and spectators, threatened to interrupt the business of the evening; but they were checked and silenced, by a remonstrance from the President of the Board."

On the evening of Saturday, the 8th, the Board of Trustees met in the College Library, and resolved "That no charge against Dr. Cooper, shewing that his continuance in office defeats the ends and aims of the Institution, or authorizing his removal, has been substantiated by proof, and that the charges against him be therefore dismissed!!!" The above is from a report of Dr. Cooper's defence, published by himself in the following month.

The second point rests upon the fact, that what are called "religious revivals" are encouraged and promoted by all the orthodox sects, except the Episcopal Church; and are avowed by themselves to be the chief means by which the influence of religion is extended. They occur at seasons of extraordinary excitement, and are created and supported by prolonged and multiplied services.

Two of these revivals, on a very large scale, have occurred among the Wesleyans, in the west of Cornwall, in 1799, and 1814; and the accurate reports, published annually by the Conference, make it easy to trace their effects. I saw part of the last, and have no hesitation in declaring, that the whole depends upon physical causes; that it is, in fact, a peculiar nervous attack, caused by strong mental excitement operating upon persons of an excitable temperament, generally young women, and consisting of violent convulsive struggles, similar to those of epilepsy, combined with temporary monomania.

If any good were effected by these revivals, by awakening the attention of the careless, and creating a stronger and more general interest in religion, their excesses and irregularity might be excused and endured. But there is unquestionable proof that they have a most destructive influence.

Thus, in 1791, the number of members in connexion with the Methodist Societies in West Cornwall was 3242; at that time, more than one-twentieth part of the whole Methodist body. The average annual increase to 1798 inclusive, was 199. In 1799, there was a revival in these circuits, and an increase of 4347 was reported for that year. But such was the falling away in the six following years, that the real annual increase from 1799 to 1805, inclusive, averaged only 12: so that, besides the loss of the whole number added in the year of the revival, the additions in it, and the six following years, were 1122 below those of the seven years, and 2118 below the average of the five years preceding; for the annual increase from 1794 to 1798 averaged 365.

In eight years, from 1806 to 1813 inclusive, the average increase was 429. A revival in 1814 added 5,039; but the real annual increase for eight years, from 1814 to 1821, was only 83, a loss of 2,422

prompts a man to exalt himself against his earthly ruler, carries him onward to impious

above the whole number added by the revival. So little reliance is to be placed in excited feelings, where they do not grow out of principles firmly established upon sound scriptural knowledge. And yet numbers are found in the West of Cornwall who still advocate revivalism.

Nor do the numbers shew the whole evil. They who make religion consist in excited feelings revolt at sober instruction; and there is very close connexion between the excitement of pseudo-religion, and of the animal passions. In the circuits and places where the Revival of 1814 prevailed, there has latterly been much turbulence, extending to schisms and secessions; and the lower order of females have been unchaste to a degree unknown before. It is a fact, to which hundreds can testify, that up to the end of the war there was not a single street-walker in Falmouth, though a naval port, and with a regiment always stationed there; and unhappily it is notorious that for many years past they have been numerous in all the towns in the west.

The following will shew the increase or decrease in those circuits, for every year from 1792 to 1821 :—

	INCREASE.	DECREASE.
1792	—	42
3	—	392
4	249	
5	193	
6	663	
7	385	
8	319	
9	Revival 4347	
1800	—	1494
1	—	878
2	—	505
3	—	771
4	—	310
5	—	305
6	32	
7	60	
8	180	
9	293	
10	207	
11	145	
12	805	
13	1714	
14	Revival. 5039	
15	—	480
16	—	1132
17	—	675
18	—	744
19	—	695
20	—	519
21	—	128

questioning of all parts of God's revealed word, against which a blind judgment, and a corrupt heart, may suggest a cavil. The next consequence, still flowing from the same principle, is to reason upon the propensities of our nature, the necessity of restraining, and the harm of indulging them. Thus he proceeds, till, rejecting the truth of God, and judicially abandoned to a reprobate mind, nothing restrains him from obeying every impulse of brutal passion, except the fear of public shame: a check, which ceases to exist, when such principles infect a whole community. So revolutionary France murdered the king, denied God, and wallowed in profligacy; and the same principles would, in any age or Country, lead to the same results. For Democracy, infidelity, and sensuality spring from the same root, a proud and rebellious self-will, and they have the same connexion and mutual relation, as the blade, the blossom, and the fruit. Nor is this a mere conclusion of human observation and reason. Thus the Bible identifies, and thus, as one, condemns them.

"The Lord knoweth how to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished; but chiefly them that walk in the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government; presumptuous are they, self-willed; they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities, &c.—(2 Peter ii. 9—19.)—"Likewise, also, these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, speak evil of dignities. These speak evil of those things which they know not; but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves. Wo unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core.* These are spots in your feasts of

* The common crime of these notorious offenders was a presumptuous self-will, which, in the self-righteousness, covetousness, or pride, of their evil heart, led them to resist God's appointment. Cain substituted will-worship for that which God had ordained; offering the fruits of the earth, a mere expression of thankfulness for God's bounty, instead of animal sacrifice, the appointed means of expiating sin. Balaam, "loving the wages of unrighteousness,"

charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever." — (Jude, 8—13.)

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and unwilling to surrender the promised honours and rewards, strove against the declared will and purpose of God concerning his people. Korah withstood God's appointed ministers, and, on the plea that "all the Lord's people are holy," intruded himself into their office. It is worthy of remark, that these all professed to serve and worship God, even in committing the crimes which brought down his judgments upon them; thus plainly shewing, that a profession of religion, and a pretence of sincerity, conscience, and zeal, is quite compatible with the worst principles of our nature; and that, if we presume to worship God according to our own inventions, instead of learning and doing his will, with all teachableness and humility, our service will be abomination, and we shall be judged as offenders.

The crime of Balaam, and Korah, presents no difficulty; but the original offence of Cain is so generally overlooked in the enormity of his subsequent guilt—even the excellent Bishop Hall in his notes on this passage regards only his envy and murder—that a fuller explanation seems required. The late Bishop Van Mildert has the following passage:—"No reason so probable can be assigned for the acceptance of Abel's sacrifice, and the rejection of Cain's, as that the former, being an animal sacrifice, was offered up agreeably to the Divine command, and was typical of the promised Redeemer, 'by faith' in whom, 'Abel' is said to have 'offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain;' whilst the latter was no better than an act of will-worship, an offering contrary to the Divine command, inexpressive of humiliation, or of the necessity of an expiatory sacrifice, and proceeding from a presumptuous disregard of the doctrine of atonement by blood. The institution itself being significant of that doctrine, and the performance of it enjoined as an evidence of man's reliance on the promised Redeemer, who was to be offered as a sacrifice for sin, a wilful departure from this ordinance indicated a disposition to contemn, as unnecessary, the thing signified as well as the sign itself, and to trust to other expedients for obtaining salvation than those which God has ordained.

"In Cain, therefore, we have the first instance after the Fall, of the Tempter's success in prevailing upon men, through the pride of human reason, to oppose God's merciful design; and through want of faith, to reject the instituted means of pardon and acceptance. But no sooner had he thus perversely alienated himself from God, than he became a prey to the sinful passions of his corrupt nature, and exhibited a deplorable example of the wretched condition of man when he forsakes God, and becomes a 'child of the devil.' Murder was the fruit of this apostacy; and his immediate punishment was that of being abandoned to his own devices, cast off from the service of God, and deprived of his covenanted title to the Divine favour."—Boyle's Lectures, 3d edit. p. 37 to 39.

"Abel, in firm reliance on the promise of God, and in obedience to his command, offered that sacrifice which had been enjoined as the religious expression of his faith; whilst Cain, disregarding the gracious assurances which had been vouchsafed, or at least disdaining to adopt the prescribed mode of manifesting his belief, possibly, as not appearing to *his reason* to possess any efficacy, or natural fitness, thought he had sufficiently acquitted himself of his duty, in acknowledging the general superintendence of God, and expressing his gratitude to the Supreme Benefactor, by presenting some of those good things, which he thereby confessed to have derived from his bounty. In short, Cain, the first-born after the Fall, exhibits the first fruits of his parents' disobedience, in the arrogance and self-sufficiency of reason rejecting the aids of Revelation, because they fell not within *its* apprehension of right. He takes the first place in the annals of Deism, and displays, in his proud rejection of the ordinance of sacrifice, the same spirit, which, in latter days, has actuated his *enlightened* followers, in rejecting the sacrifice of Christ."—Magee on the Atonement, 4th edit. vol. i. p. 52, 53. The subject is treated at length from p. 49 to the end of the chapter.

See also in the Appendix to Van Mildert's Boyle's Lectures, vol. i. p. 471 to 473, extracts to the same purport from Bp. Sherlock; Dr. Glocester Ridley; Dr. E. Law, Bp. of Carlisle; and Mr. Hingeston; and also references to the works of several foreign divines.

THE CHURCH ESTABLISHED ON THE BIBLE;

OR, THE DOCTRINES AND DISCIPLINE OF THE CHURCH SHEWN, IN THE ORDER AND CONNEXION OF THE SERVICES SHE APPOINTS FROM THE SCRIPTURES.

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

Christians safe within the Church, as in a sheepfold, with Christ for their Shepherd.

Morning Lesson . .	Numbers xxiii. xxiv.
Evening Lesson . .	Numbers xxv.
Epistle	1 Peter ii. 19—25.
Gospel	St. John x. 11—16.

In the gospel, our Lord declares himself the good Shepherd, who giveth his life for the sheep; and contrasts his own affectionate solicitude for their safety with that of an hireling, who fleeth at the first appearance of danger, and leaves the flock to destruction. He affirms that his fold is one. There is "one Catholic and Apostolic Church," comprehending Jews and Gentiles, all the faithful of every land, who acknowledge the "one Lord," hold the "one faith," and enter by "one baptism."

The services present four particulars, which we are required, as Christ's flock, to consider well.

The deliverance we have experienced. "We were as sheep going astray," helpless, unable to escape or resist him, who as a roaring lion, goeth about seeking whom he may devour. Christ hath saved us from becoming a prey to his teeth; and, to increase our gratitude, by giving for us his own life.

The safety we enjoy. While we stay within the fold, and observe our Shepherd to obey him, nothing can harm us. The enchantments of Balaam shall prove as ineffectual as the power of Balak. They who come out to curse shall be constrained to bless, and the schemes of malice shall recoil upon itself. The chapters appointed for the morning lesson contain many subjects of great interest in the prophecies of Balaam, but the point which claims particular attention, is the picture they present of Israel, the flock of God, delivered by his power, cherished by his goodness, led and defended by his hand, and safe under his protection. Their enemies may strive to break through the sacred enclosure; but "they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand!"

The character which we are required to sustain, as members of Christ's flock. The metaphor is preserved throughout. Meekness, patience, and purity, proverbially characterize sheep. These qualities the epistle enjoins, and enforces them by the example of Christ. In accordance with the epistle and gospel, we acknowledge in the Collect the salvation we have obtained by his sacrifice of himself, and pray for grace to walk after his most holy example.

The subject is completed in the evening lesson. Tempted and seduced by those whose avowed enmity could never harm them, Israel went astray. God never winks at the sin of his people; and on this occasion, prompt and severe punishment followed the offence. He restored them upon their repentance, but not until they had been bitterly taught the evil of forsaking Him. In the conduct and reward of Phinehas we see the duty and blessing of being faithful to God, and zealous for his honour, in time of general corruption.

One point more is to be noticed. God having restored Israel to his favour, commands them to vex and smite those who had led them astray. Thus, if we have fallen into sin, it behoves us, being restored by God's mercy in Christ upon our repentance, to gird up ourselves for more determined hostility against those who had corrupted us; the world, the flesh, and the devil: and to admit of no terms nor compromise with enemies, who never can harm us, while we know and treat them as such; but who, if we listen to their pretended friendship, will corrupt and turn us to destruction.

XXXI.

When cares disturb, and foes oppress,
God of my truth, to thee I fly;
Thou hast enlarged me in distress:
Have mercy now, and hear my cry.

O ye, who seek to harm his saints,
Why will ye lift the impious hand?
Know, God regards their just complaints;—
The counsel of the Lord shall stand!

Cease then to strive! from sin depart;
Before his presence stand in awe!
Commune in secret with your heart;
Trust in the Lord, and keep his law!

While others seek for earthly store,
Lord, fill our heart with light and peace;
These heavenly gifts rejoice us more
Than when their corn and wine increase.

I lay me down, and take my rest;
Calmly I sleep, for Thou art near;
With thy protecting presence blest,
What should thy happy servants fear!

Psalm IV.

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

The Duty of God's People.

Morning Lesson	Deuteronomy iv.
Evening Lesson	Deuteronomy v.
Epistle . .	1 Pet. ii. 11—17.
Gospel . .	St. John xvi. 16—22.

The first Sunday after Easter describes the Church of Christ; as to its members, faith, and government. The second, calls our attention to the safety we enjoy therein, as in a secure sheepfold, under Christ the good Shepherd. To-day, we learn the duty of all "that are admitted into the fellowship of Christ's religion;" namely, to "eschew those things that are contrary to their profession, and follow all such things as are agreeable to the same. The lessons and the gospel have that pathos, which belongs to the last injunctions of a dying friend; for the lessons are taken from Moses' parting instructions to Israel; and the gospel, from our Lord's address to his disciples immediately before his agony.

In the lessons, Moses repeats the Law of the ten commandments; particularly explaining those which relate to the honour and worship claimed by Almighty God. He impresses upon them the obligation to strict obedience, by their own recollection of the awful manner in which the Law was proclaimed; by the great privileges they enjoyed; and by the blessing and the curse which they had seen to attend upon obedience, or rebellion. He repeats to them the words of God himself, to prove his solicitude that they should walk in his way, and obtain his blessings: "O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever!" Deut. v. 29.

In accordance with the instructions of Moses are the words of the epistle. St. Peter reminds Christians that they are "strangers" on earth, "pilgrims" journeying to their Canaan. As such, he enjoins them so to purify themselves, and adorn their profession by their conduct, as to disarm malice, and compel their very enemies to glorify God on their behalf. He warns them strictly against making religion an excuse to disturb the order of society, and to resist the government and laws under which they live; and which he declares it to be the will of God that they obey. This command obliges us with tenfold force, for the authority to which he enjoined obedience was that of a heathen State. He sums up all in one emphatic sentence, which comprehends all our duties in society, and in the Church; as christians, and as subjects;—"Honour all men; love the brotherhood; fear God; honour the king."

The Gospel offers a sure hope to support us under all the trials of a christian life. They are but for a little while. These very pains shall work for us everlasting joy; in the possession of which all shall be forgotten, as a mother forgets her sorrow in embracing her newborn child. What if we find it hard to maintain the holy obedience which God requires; inasmuch as our corrupt nature will revolt, the world oppose, and the enemy harass! What if we have sorrows, that bow down our very soul! This is our confidence; that the trial is short; God's help is our sufficient strength; his peace, our defence and comfort; and the joy, which the

faithful followers of Christ shall have at his appearing, is assured to them, and that for ever!

XXXII.

Thee we adore, Almighty Lord!
Vouchsafe our humble prayer to hear:
O give us grace to love thy word,
And keep thy Law with holy fear.

So may thy peace our steps attend
Through all the duties of the day;
Thy grace our strength, thy praise our end,
In all we think, or do, or say.

To ev'ry law ordain'd by Thee
Our willing homage let us bring;
Faithful to all the powers that be;
Loyal and firm to serve our King.

Placed on the earth, yet born for heaven,
And taught to seek our treasures there,
Let all our hearts to Thee be given,
And all our lives thy truth declare.

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

God's People renewed in Heart.

Morning Lesson . Deuteronomy vi.
Evening Lesson . Deuteronomy vii.
Epistle . . . . St. James i. 17—21.
Gospel . . . . St. John xvi. 5—15.

From considering the duty of God's people, we proceed in regular order to the principle upon which they perform it: which is that renewal, or change of heart, effected by the power of the Holy Ghost, whereby our unruly wills and affections are subdued, and new desires implanted. They in whom this blessed change is wrought, instead of indulging their natural sinful inclinations, now love the thing which God commandeth, and desire that which He doth promise, and so pass through the world, as those who have set their affections upon treasures which they know to be laid up for them in heaven.

The life of this heavenly principle is love to God; exalted by a most grateful recollection of his goodness, and chastened with an awful sense of his power. No earthly idol may divide our affections with Him. We must love the LORD our God with all our heart, and with all our soul, and with all our might. The word of his truth must prevail in us, to sanctify all our thoughts and actions. In this we must carefully instruct our children: this must season our conversation, mark our character, and hallow our homes. We must depend upon God, and trust Him, under all circumstances; neither forgetting Him while we enjoy the abundance of his bounty, nor murmuring when He tries us with adversity. We must observe diligently his laws, and keep his commandments; duly considering the deliverance He hath wrought, and the hope He hath given. Against all our spiritual enemies, and whatever would draw us aside from Him, we must wage unceasing war. None may be allowed; none may be spared; for we are an holy people unto the Lord our God. We must be humble in the possession of our privileges; duly considering our own unworthiness. We must be confident against our enemies; for the Lord is our strength.

Such is the principle, and such its fruits, as presented in the morning and evening lessons. The gospel informs us how this happy disposition is imparted, and this glorious change wrought. The Holy Ghost, the Comforter, the Spirit of wisdom, purity, and might; whom our Lord promised to send to his disciples, and who descended visibly upon them on the day of Pentecost;—he, by whose grace we are regenerated, and made the sons of God in baptism;—he strives, and works with us, to renew us after the image of our heavenly Father. He guides us into all truth, taking of the things of Christ, and shewing them unto us. By him we receive the gift, and the increase, of all the blessings which Christ hath purchased for us, and which we implore in his name; heavenly life, spiritual discernment, the strength in which we contend, and the comfort wherewith we are refreshed.

The epistle teaches that we should receive and improve those good and perfect gifts,—which all are from above, and imparted by the Father of lights,—with a teachable, modest, and gentle disposition; being careful to avoid whatever may stain our purity, and receiving "with meekness the engrafted word." An expression similar to the last occurs in the beautiful and well-known Col-

lect for the seventh Sunday after Trinity; and it is full of meaning. The natural branches of a wild stock are cut away, and a portion of a good tree is inserted. The new principle, thus introduced, is carefully cherished; and the wild shoots which the stock pushes forth continually are destroyed as fast as they appear; for, being suffered to remain, they would starve the graft. Thus the better principle gradually gains strength, till it draws into itself all the vigour and juices of the plant; and though the stock and root remain the same, the increase of the graft overpowers the original tendencies of its nature, and it becomes in effect a new tree. In all this we observe the analogy between the operations of Nature and of Grace.

There is one more point of resemblance. The end and object of the renewed heart, as of the renewed tree, is to bring forth good fruit. Failing in this, the same sentence will go forth—"Cut it down, and cast it into the fire."

XXXIII.

CHRIST for ev'ry man hath died;
He for all hath risen again;
Jesus now is glorified;
Gifts he hath received for men.

By his Cross behold him lead
Captive our Captivity;
Now shall we be free indeed;
Christ the Son hath made us free.

Lord, the Comforter impart,
All thine image to restore:
Let him dwell in ev'ry heart,
Come, and never leave us more:

Come, with blessings from above;
Wisdom, purity, and peace;
Holy comfort, perfect love,
Meekness, strength, and righteousness.

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

The danger of neglecting to improve our privileges.

Morning Lesson . .	Deuteronomy viii.
Evening Lesson . .	Deuteronomy ix.
Epistle	St. James i. 22—27.
Gospel	St. John xvi. 23—33.

In the fifth chapter of Isaiah, the great Husbandman vindicates the judgment He was about to bring upon his unfruitful vineyard, by recounting the care which He had bestowed upon it in vain. "What could have been done more to my vineyard that I have not done it: wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?"

The lessons for to-day illustrate this appeal. They recount God's goodness and care, his discipline and correction towards Israel: they describe the good and pleasant land in which He was about to plant them; declare what He required of them, and warn them of the fatal consequences of disappointing his just expectations; a warning, which in the end was most awfully accomplished. The evening lesson, after shewing that it is only by the help of God that they overcome their enemies, and only from his undeserved goodness that they obtain their blessings, cautions them for the future, by bringing to their remembrance the past; reminding them how unfaithful and unworthy they had always been; and how often they had deserved, and narrowly escaped utter condemnation.

We therefore, who are planted in Christ's Church, ought to tremble; lest, deceiving our own souls, we rest on the possession of our privileges, and forget the duties they require. In vain are we hearers of the word, unless we are also doers. Fair and flourishing may be our profession; but we shall be counted cumberers of the ground, if we bring not forth good fruit. Not the forgetful hearer, but the doer of the word is blessed.

The duty required of us is not grievous. God's service is a perfect law of liberty, because the renewed heart freely chooses, and entirely delights to do his will; and this is the test which distinguishes between the empty and the sincere professor. The description which St. James in the epistle gives of pure and undefiled religion is altogether practical. It is to control every unruly temper, expressed by bridling the tongue; to abound in works of charity; and to keep ourselves pure.

As the epistle teaches our duty, the gospel shews how we may obtain strength to perform it. Prayer in the name of Christ is effectual, through his prevailing intercession, and

because the Father himself loveth us. They who ask, shall receive, to their great comfort; and the Holy Ghost will impart that clear knowledge of spiritual things which will teach the sincere disciple to pray with the understanding. With these promises, the gospel contains a caution to the self-confident, in the gentle rebuke which our Lord gave to his boasting disciples, who in that very hour would forsake, and leave him in the hands of his enemies: and also comfort and encouragement to the desponding and feeble:—"These things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

XXXIV.

Set in a high and favor'd place,
Like chosen plants we stand;
Nurtured with God's peculiar grace,
And guarded by his hand.

But where are found the heav'nly fruits
His vineyard should afford!
Shall worldly cares, and vain pursuits,
Be offer'd to the Lord?

Forgive, O God, our deep offence!
Take not thy grace away;
Nor leave our souls without defence,
The fierce destroyer's prey.

Spare thine unworthy creatures still:
Our low affections raise;
And make us faithful to thy will,
And fruitful to thy praise.

ASCENSION DAY.

Christ appoints a perpetual Ministry, and ascends to his glory.

Morning Lesson . . Deuteronomy x.
Luke xxiv. 44—53.
Evening Lesson . . 2 Kings ii.
Ephesians iv. 1—16.
For the Epistle . . Acts i. 1—11.
Gospel . . . . . St. Mark xvi. 14—20.
Proper Psalms, Morning, viii. xv. xxi.
Evening, xxiv. xlvii. cviii.

Two great events are commemorated on this day: the ascension of our Lord to his glory; and his appointment of a Ministry, to feed, govern, edify, and unite the Church, in his name, and by his authority, until he shall return at the end of all things.

His triumphal ascent to heaven as a glorious conqueror is celebrated in the proper Psalms. Of these, the viii., as explained Heb. ii. 5—9, figures his humiliation and triumph; the xxi. 1—7, describes the honour and dignity which God hath conferred upon him, in exalting his human nature to glory; the xv. and xxiv. 3—6, the character of such as shall share in his exaltation, for which blessing we pray in the Collect; the xxiv. 7—10, and the xlvii. are hymns of joy and triumph at his ascension; the cviii. under the type of David, celebrates his sovereignty and conquests; the xxi. 8—13, the overthrow of his enemies; and the xlvii. 7—9, his universal dominion.

The fact of his glorious ascension is described, or referred to, in all the services taken from the New Testament: St. Mark xvi. 19; St. Luke xxiv. 51; Acts i. 9; and Ephesians iv. 8—10. The glory to which he ascended is affirmed by St. Mark;—"He was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God." His previous descent is alluded to; Ephesians iv. 9, 10. St. Luke relates the divine homage offered by the disciples; "they worshipped him:" and in the Acts it is declared by the angels, that he shall so come again with his glory. The other parts of the service refer chiefly to the provision which he made for the care of his Church, when it should be deprived of his visible presence.

This is represented by various types in the Old Testament lessons. Moses going up the mount into the presence of God, and bringing down the tables of the testimony, written by the finger of God, which he committed to the charge of the priests, to be kept in the ark of the covenant, Deuteronomy x. 1—5, may well figure the ascension of Christ to the right hand of the Father; with the gifts which he received for men, and his testimony, which is communicated through his ministers, and "written with the Spirit of the living God, not on tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart;" 2 Cor. iii. 3.

The death of Aaron, a type of our Lord in his priestly office, and the appointment of his son to minister in his stead, v. 6, represents the close of our Lord's ministry, and the investiture of the apostles with the charge which he had borne. The accordance is the closer, in that the office of the priesthood was put upon

Eleazar just before Aaron's death; Numbers xx. 24—29.

The separation of a particular tribe to minister in holy things is told v. 8, 9; and to the end of the chapter is contained the sum of the moral law, which Israel was to observe.

The evening lesson figures the ascension of Christ in the translation of Elijah; and the conferring of the power of the Ministry upon the apostles, by the succession of Elisha to his master's office and spirit. The miracles wrought attested, as that "the spirit of Elijah rested upon Elisha," so that the spirit and power of Christ was upon the apostles. The destruction of the young persons who came out of Bethel, and mocked the prophet, shews how highly God resents any indignity offered to his ministers. "He that despiseth you, despiseth me."

In accordance with these types, we have in the second morning lesson, the epistle, and the gospel, our Lord's commission to the apostles, confirmed in the Holy Ghost. The account given by St. Matthew of the same great event, was read on Easter Monday; and that by St. John, on the first Sunday after Easter. The objects of the ministerial office are described by St. Paul in the second evening lesson; every word of which ought to be most carefully studied. Nothing can be more emphatic than his declarations, that the Church is ONE; or more clear than his description of the office of the ministry;—to build it up, and perfect it in unity, as one body in Christ, of which all the members are fitly joined and knit together: but this cannot be, unless there be agreement in all material points of discipline, as well as doctrine. The different orders of the Ministry are appointed to perfect, establish, and firmly settle all christians in the unity of the faith; "that we be henceforth no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive." He enjoins the dispositions by which unity may be preserved in the Church; "lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love, endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace:" and he teaches how we ought to act towards those who reject the authority of the Church, and separate themselves from her communion:—"speaking the truth in love."

This short sentence contains a safe rule. Charity is an universal duty; but it is for the individuals, not for their errors. As we ought to love the sinner, while we abhor his sin, so we may live in charity with all men; yet neither sanction, nor palliate schism, nor suppress, nor understate, the truth which condemns it. Hold right principles, with at once the most unyielding firmness, and the greatest gentleness. Speak the truth, but in love. Maintain the right, yet never in a spirit of strife or party. Cherish love for all men; but never forget that to allow error, is to betray the truth.

XXXV.

Lord of the Church! we humbly pray
For them who guide us in thy way,
And speak thy holy word;
With love divine their hearts inspire,
And touch their lips with hallow'd fire,
And needful strength afford.

Help them to preach the truth of God,
Redemption through the Saviour's blood;
Nor let the Spirit cease
On all the Church his gifts to shower;
To them, a messenger of power;
To us, of light and peace.

So may they live to Thee alone;
Then hear the welcome word,—'Well done,'
And take their crown above:
Enter into the Master's joy,
And all eternity employ
In praise, and bliss, and love.

XXXVI.

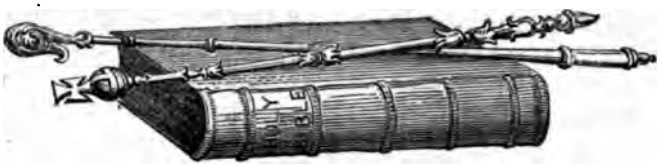
The Pastor's voice we lov'd to hear,
But often heard, alas, in vain,
In hallow'd words of praise and prayer,
Will never bless our ear again.

Oh! let us dwell with solemn thought
On all the words of truth he gave!
The lesson to the heart is brought,
When sorrow muses o'er the grave.

O Saviour! from thy holy hill
Regard our wants, and hear our cry;
Thou art our guide and shepherd still,
Though earthly pastors fall and die.

When thou didst bid thy flock farewell,
Thy love could make their sorrows cease;
The Spirit came with them to dwell,
Thy messenger of truth and peace.

CHURCH AND KING.



"FEAR GOD—HONOUR THE KING."

No. VIII. MAY 1, 1837.

THE CHURCH AND DISSENT,

CONSIDERED IN THEIR PRACTICAL INFLUENCE.

CHAPTER VII.

The Church and Dissent, their Influence on Religion.

THE objects of an institution for the religious instruction of the community may be classed under the seven following heads; — duly to set forth all the Scriptures: — to provide for the religious instruction of every part of the Country: — to direct the religious education of the young: — to preserve the truth, especially in times of national corruption: — to promote personal religion: — to afford comfort, and help, to all who are restrained from the privileges of public worship: — and to influence the character of those who are generally indifferent or hostile to religion. A simple statement of almost self-evident facts will shew how the Church provides for these; and how entirely Dissent fails, in each, and all of them.

I. The Church appoints the Old Testament to be read through in the course of a year, except those parts which refer exclusively to details of Jewish polity. The books are taken in their regular order; except that Isaiah is passed by in its turn, that it may be read last of all, in November and December; because its evangelical character makes it peculiarly suitable as a preparation for the festival of our Lord's Nativity. The New Testament, except the Revelations, of which only select portions are used, as lessons appointed for particular days, is read through in four months; and the Psalms, every month. The portion appointed for daily reading, therefore, includes two chapters from the Old Testament in their order; a chapter from the Gospels, or Acts; another from the Epistles; and on an average, five Psalms. Daily service is held only in cathedral and collegiate churches; but it is, I believe, a very common practice with decided followers of the Church, especially with females, to make the appointed lessons a part of their private devotions; and independent of the knowledge of Scripture which it imparts, the advantages of this plan are very great. When the extent of private worship depends on the feelings of the worshipper, it is very liable to be hurried over, unless he should already be found in that devotional frame of mind, which it is an important object of worship to create: and, what is worse, while his words are addressed to God, his heart and thoughts will be too often divided with the business to which he is in haste to proceed. But when the stated religious services, to which it is strictly made a point of principle to attend, are of some length, their extent not depending on the choice of the individual, they become the business of that portion of time which is appointed for their performance. A connexion is created between the successive acts of devotion by the orderly reading of the Scriptures, which greatly increases the interest and

profit; and the public services of the Church, which consist chiefly of Scripture reading, are doubly delightful to those who are accustomed to dwell with pleasure on the Bible. They who desire instruction, will study *all* the Word of God. Where chapters are selected without a plan, favourites will be continually chosen, which may stimulate the imagination, or gratify the taste; and the rest will be passed by.

A select course of Scripture reading is appointed for the Sundays, and principal holidays, which may present in every year an orderly and complete system of doctrine, discipline, and duty. By this arrangement, the two lessons from the Old Testament, with the selected portions from one of the epistles, and gospels, unite to illustrate some important truth, to set forth the practical duties which that truth involves, and to offer needful caution against any probable abuse of it. On the chief festivals, suitable New Testament lessons, and Psalms, are also appointed: otherwise, those are read which are appointed in the calendar. Thus, persons unable to read, if they attend Church on Sundays and holidays, will have heard in the course of the year about 140 of the more important, and practical chapters of the Old Testament; with selections from the New Testament to illustrate them; in addition to which, they will hear the whole of the New Testament in little more than two years, and the whole Psalter every seven months. This, the care of the Church to nourish her flock abundantly with the pure words of Scripture, may justly be deemed her chief glory; nor does it appear easy, or possible, to devise a plan, by which this most important object may be more effectually attained.

The practice of dissenters upon this point may be stated in few words. Whenever a sermon is preached, usually twice on Sunday, and on one evening in the week, a single chapter *or* Psalm, forms part of the service. At prayer-meetings, of which one is usually held on Sunday, and one or more on week-day evenings, the Scriptures are not read. Altogether, therefore, about 160 chapters, *or* Psalms, will be read in the course of a year; which would require seven years to go through the Bible. And as they are not read according to any system, for that chapter is commonly selected from which the minister takes his text, they cannot make the same impression, as if they were brought before the people in a regular order. We are warranted, therefore in declaring, that a person who depends upon what he shall hear for his knowledge of the Scriptures, can never acquire this knowledge in a dissenting Meeting.

If it be said, in excuse for this neglect, that the people read the Scriptures at home, it may be answered, that the disinclination to hear them in the House of God augurs but unfavourably. If the sermon of three quarters of an hour were shortened by one-third, and the time thus gained were devoted to another chapter, and one or two Psalms, the service would be far more profitable, and ought not to be less attractive. But if many do read and study the Bible as they ought, there are many who neglect it, upon whose attention it ought to be enforced; and many who cannot read it, who have a peculiar claim that it should be duly set forth to them.

A serious evil arises from the minister choosing the Scripture lessons. It enables him to make the Bible speak only his own views and feelings; by selecting chapters which accord with his own ideas, and omitting whatever would clash with them.

¶I. A Church, neglected, persecuted, and oppressed, may keep the truth; but it cannot instruct the Country, unless the means be afforded. All who can appreciate the blessing are therefore bound, to the extent of their power, to obtain it for their dependants: — parents, for their children; lords, for their tenantry; the rich, for the poor. Nor is the duty of mere private obligation. Rulers, also, are required to promote the eternal, as well as the temporal interests, of the people whom God has committed to their charge, by affording that needful encouragement, and help, by which Christian truth may be brought home to those, who from indifference would not seek it, or from poverty could not obtain it, or from ignorance could not appreciate its value. God has given them power to do this, and they are accountable to Him for the right use of it. If it be their office to advance the prosperity of the nation, Religion is the only

foundation upon which national prosperity can surely rest. If they are required to punish crime, still more is it their duty to prevent it. Knowing as they do the demoralizing influence of neglected ignorance and poverty, if they take no care for the due instruction of the lowest and poorest, they themselves are morally guilty of the crime, for which they send the criminal to the gallows.

As he who leaves a fellow-creature to perish, whom he could have saved, is in effect a murderer, so they who allow ignorance and sin to exist, having power to correct them, are guilty of the blood of souls. Rulers, therefore, are bound, as they shall answer for their charge at God's tribunal, to take care that the means of religious instruction are duly provided for all the Country; especially for the scattered population of rural districts, and the myriads buried in large towns. Let Dissent plant itself wherever it can; — let it be tolerated to the uttermost; but if it exert political, or other influence, to prevent the State from performing this, its highest duty, it incurs a guilt which it is fearful to contemplate.

But, says the dissenter, I contend for the sacred rights of conscience, and it is a part of these rights, that I should pay only for the mode of worship which I prefer. Will he contend, also, that religion shall be denied to those who are unable to pay for it? No; every place of worship is open! But what avails this, if the poor find no accommodation provided for them within? Let the inclosures of Dissent be respected, and let it extend them as far as it can. But let it not forbid the State to cultivate the moral waste beyond them; nor affirm that millions of our brethren must be left to perish, because they cannot be saved upon dissenting principles; nor say that the State shall not effect the highest of all national objects, the religious instruction of the poor, because the Church would be the agent. She *must* be the agent, if it be done at all; for Dissent cannot do it from its own resources, and will not act in connexion with the State.

The objection of dissenters to contribute to the support of an established Church, rests upon a fallacy. A man does not go to a place of worship, as to a market, to choose what he likes best, and pay his money for just that modicum of religion which he requires for himself. The principle of a national Church is, that instruction shall be provided FREELY for all who cannot purchase it; and every man, dissenter as well as churchman, is interested in promoting such an object; not only upon the general duty of Christian charity, but also for the advantage to himself; which is no less than that of living in a civilized and a Christian, instead of in a barbarous and a heathen land.

The limits within which the voluntary principle can act with effect are very circumscribed. It cannot support itself in districts with a poor and scattered population; a fact, which alone places half the community beyond its influence. In very large towns, it may form respectable congregations; but, although the credit and power of Dissent, as a party, are thus advanced, the great object of the Christian ministry, preaching the Gospel to the poor, is not attained. For the heavy expenses to be met, particularly to support the minister, since the amount of a liberal salary in the Country would be beggary in London, require that the pressing interests of the Meeting shall be exclusively considered; and the space which may be let as pews, cannot be afforded to free sittings. Hence Dissent has not been able to gather in the myriads of neglected poor in our large manufacturing towns, which have increased so greatly beyond their church-accommodation; nor is this to be mentioned as its fault, for it is the inevitable effect of its system. In London, though the increase has been so vast, Dissent, instead of occupying the vacant ground, is actually declining, and the number of its Meeting-houses has diminished, some having been converted into chapels of ease, and others applied to secular purposes. In Liverpool, the second town in England, I have reason to believe, that in 1832 there were only eleven dissenting congregations.

A Meeting in London, though its respectability, and other causes, preserve it, in a great measure, from the baneful effects of strife, has dangers of its own, which are by no means inconsiderable. In a country town, where there is only one Meeting of the sect, when the minister dies, or is removed, parties may quarrel on the choice of a successor.

In London, where there is a choice of Meetings, the death or removal of a minister leaves his friends at liberty to transfer their attendance to another place, where there may be a minister whose preaching they admire, or with whom they are personally acquainted. There are many in every congregation whose attachment is loose, and directed rather to the minister than the cause. The more prominent and respectable friends, indeed, would not act thus; but they will be gradually lost by death, or removal; while, of their children, some are scattered, and others leave the sect. A very popular preacher has a hurtful effect upon congregations in his neighbourhood, by drawing away some of their people, and unsettling others. If a Meeting seriously decline in London, it is difficult to restore it; because its diminished funds no longer enable it to command the necessary popular talents. This may explain why Dissent has been declining in the Metropolis, though with a clear, and increasing field for its labours.

Thus we have two of the largest sections of the Community, to which Dissent, by its very nature, cannot apply itself, — the population of country districts, and the poorer classes in large towns; and these are the very classes who more especially demand religious instruction. Neglect the rural population, and the Country sinks to barbarism; neglect the masses in town, and they become demoralized and turbulent.

The real strength of Dissent is found in towns with from 3000 to 10,000 inhabitants; in which, if it have not to compete with Methodism, which, however, is generally pressing upon it, and cutting short its borders, it will usually claim a fair proportion. Such towns are not too large to allow individuals to escape in the crowd from the scandal of professing no religion; and the chief part of the population, poor as well as rich, will attend some place of worship. Since almost every town has outgrown its church-room, the surplus must attend elsewhere. In smaller places it is a heartless struggle for the minister, from the difficulty of collecting a congregation who can raise for him the means of existence; in larger towns, the Meetings will be more respectable, but Dissent now ceases to be the religion of the poor, and its proportion to the population diminishes.

It is evident, therefore, that the spiritual wants of the Country can be met only by a Church Establishment; and it is the duty of our Rulers to give full effect to such means as the heads of the Church may advise, for removing the dreadful evils which exist among us; especially in the spiritual destitution of our large towns. It is our business, urgently to press this duty upon them; and by all the means in our power, to strengthen their hands in effecting it.

III. The religious instruction of the young is a duty most strongly enjoined in Scripture, which offers every encouragement to perform it zealously. The Church has not been unmindful of this duty; and it is hard to say what more she could recommend, or do. Baptism, the first step in the Christian course, requires nothing for the completeness of the Sacrament, but the affusion of water by a duly authorized person, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. But the Church, following a practice which has prevailed from the earliest ages of Christianity, and which existed even in the Jewish Church, expressly connects with this Sacrament the duty of Christian instruction, by appointing other persons besides the parents, who solemnly take upon themselves the responsibility; and by impressing upon them the truth, and duty, in which the child should be brought up. This is most reasonable; for the child being now by baptism made a member of Christ's body, the Church, she is bound to take care, that as far as in her lies, proper nursing shall be secured, and suitable nourishment provided, for its tender years; till, coming to riper age, it shall walk alone, and receive more solid food. For this object, she has provided a summary of elementary Christian instruction in a Catechism, of which it is not possible to speak too highly. It is so short and simple, that a young child may sufficiently understand it; yet, so comprehensive, that when duly explained, it applies to every part of the Christian system. In three short questions and answers, it describes, first, the privileges obtained in becoming by baptism a member of Christ's visible Church: secondly, the duties belonging to these privileges; namely, Repentance,

Faith, and Holy Obedience, with direct reference to the promise and vow made by the sponsors; and, thirdly, the recognition by the child himself of his privilege, his personal obligation, his holy resolve, and his dependence upon God's help to make it effectual. A summary of faith, of duty to God and man, and of the nature and objects of prayer, founded respectively on the Apostle's Creed, the Ten Commandments, and the Lord's Prayer; with a short explanation of the Sacraments, completes this inestimable manual. Arrived at years to answer for himself, the child is called to the important rite of Confirmation; which the Church, following the example of primitive times, so insists on, that she enjoins it at the time of baptism, and requires it to be observed before the disciple can be admitted to the Holy Communion. And to the intent that this be not lightly, and irreverently undertaken, due notice is given of the Bishop's attendance, that those who present themselves may first be examined by their parish minister, without whose certificate they are not admitted to receive it.

It may be said that this, however excellent in theory, is not fully acted upon; and the objection is in some degree true. But the same would apply to Christianity itself; which yet is not held responsible, when those who profess it in words, deny it in their lives. So the Church has provided a safe road, by which all may certainly arrive at Christian truth, requiring nothing which ought not to be done, and nothing which may not easily be done. If any reject it in presumption, or neglect it in thoughtlessness, they, not she, are answerable.

But, in truth, this neglect is far less common than the opponents of the Church suppose; for they are chiefly acquainted with the practice of mere nominal churchmen, who regard church principles as matters to be lightly compromised. The evil, as far as it exists, has been chiefly created by the liberalism which has prevailed through the present century, and which, though happily fast sinking, is not yet destroyed. The Church Catechism especially has been objected to; and dissenters have always made it a condition of their supporting any school, that this Catechism be not admitted. Churchmen have been led, partly from a mistaken sense of Christian unity and charity, and partly from over-rating the co-operation of Dissent, to concede what they ought never to have even discussed. For that will not long be deemed important, which is habitually sacrificed to expediency.

Among dissenters, the Independents, who form two-thirds at least of the congregational body, baptize their children publicly, by the affusion of water, in the name of the Trinity, with a short extempore address and prayer. The Baptists do not baptize them; but their ministers often find it necessary to consult the religious feelings of parents, by publicly naming the infant before the congregation, with an address and prayer. This concession is made very reluctantly by the ministers, who justly regard it as an inclination on the part of the people for infant baptism. In both, the education of the child is left to the discretion of the parents.

No mode of religious instruction is set forth by authority; and the parents may use any catechism they prefer, or none at all. Such a latitude is very liable to cause total neglect. Most people never take the trouble to think. Mark for them a certain course of duty, and they will follow it. Leave them to choose, and they will hesitate and delay, till the time for choice is past.

The importance of impressing indelibly on the minds of children, and especially on the children of the poor, a short and simple summary of religion, like the Catechism, is increased by the consideration, that many, in the course of their lives, will be thrown into situations, where they will be deprived of all means of religious worship and instruction. Tens, and perhaps hundreds of thousands of emigrants, and others, banished for ever from their native land, and who never perhaps thought of religion before they left it, have that truth fixed in their memory, which, when they are come to themselves, may be made effectual to renew the heart. In the remote hamlets of a neglected colony, where the minister of religion is seldom or never seen, and no means exist of educating the children, a form like the Catechism may preserve the faith, being transmitted by oral instruction from one generation to another. Many illustrations of this occur in the narrative of a visitation by Archdeacon Wix last year through

Newfoundland. In deserts where a Christian minister had never penetrated before, he found that these few simple forms, carefully taught, and repeated by the children with their nightly prayers, had been made effectual to preserve religion, and civilization; while in the few situations where nothing of the kind existed, the inhabitants were sunk to the most revolting barbarism.

IV. The subject of preserving the truth in times of difficulty or corruption, has been anticipated in the second chapter. It is only necessary here to repeat, that the voluntary system, being the mere index of public opinion, will immediately represent every popular error; nor can it afford the slightest check against them, seeing that the extempore services can be accommodated, and the chapter and hymns selected, to the taste of the congregation. When the people shall say, "Speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceit," the minister must obey, or be dismissed. When "the time shall come that they will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts shall heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables," what, even the slightest check, can the voluntary system afford?

The Church, on the other hand, must be altogether changed, before she would cease to protest against unchristian innovation. Her Articles and Creeds must be expunged; her Liturgy new modelled; and the Scriptures, as now read, excluded from her services: for while these continue, the truth cannot be lost. If a corrupt Government, abusing its influence, should force into her high places men, who would teach dangerous errors, she will know how to maintain the truth, and pour shame upon her enemies, without forgetting the duty of Christians, and subjects. Of this, Oxford has lately given a noble example. If a parish have been ever so neglected or profligate, a faithful minister has not to teach the people a new doctrine, but only to enforce the spirit of forms with which they are already familiar. None, as a class, can be so little exposed to worldly motives as the clergy. The great majority of incumbents know that in all probability, they are wedded to their parishes for life; and beyond due care for their family, they have nothing to think of, but to sustain their charge, with a view to their last awful account. Happily, they are spared the temptation, to which a system of popular election would expose them, of watching for more valuable preferments, and striving, by secret practices, to establish an interest among the electors against a vacancy; and that other temptation, still more deadly, if possible, of accommodating their doctrines to the fancies of a congregation upon whom they are entirely dependent.

THE CHURCH ESTABLISHED ON THE BIBLE;

OR, THE DOCTRINES AND DISCIPLINE OF THE CHURCH SHEWN, IN THE ORDER AND CONNEXION OF THE SERVICES SHE APPOINTS FROM THE SCRIPTURES.

SUNDAY AFTER ASCENSION DAY,

The evil of Schism.

Morning Lesson .	Deut. xii.
Evening Lesson .	Deut. xiii.
Epistle . . .	1 Peter iv. 7—11.
Gospel . . .	St. John xv. 26, to xvi. 4.

The most satisfactory manner of considering the services for this day will be to observe each part separately. They have a very close agreement, and teach some very important lessons.

The gospel was spoken by our Lord to his disciples, while they were going to the scene of his agony. He promises the Comforter, not for their private help, for in that sense he had been with the faithful in all ages; but in their capacity of Apostles. The promise was to the whole Christian Church, which those present might then be said to constitute. Thus our Church understands it, and

accordingly prays in the collect for the promised blessing.

The Spirit promised is the Spirit of truth; but truth is one. The effect of the Spirit, therefore, is unity and peace, (Ascension Day, 2d Ev. Less.) and disorder, and confusion of authority, are not from him. There is ONE Catholic and Apostolic Church; the essentials of which we have no difficulty to determine, from the words of Scripture, the practice and testimony of the universal Church for fifteen centuries, and the disorder, strife, and heresy, which prevail wherever the primitive model has been departed from.

Peace is quite compatible with the most steady adherence to principle; nay, it is only by maintaining the truth firmly that we can possess it quietly. Then we may proceed with a calm steadiness of purpose and action, yet cultivate a spirit of charity towards opponents, impossible to him who lives in a continual struggle with expediency. Our Lord warns his disciples that they would be persecuted for the truth's sake, and his last address was designed to fortify them against all weak compliance. "These things have I spoken unto you that ye should not be offended:" the term, 'offended,' means in the original 'scandalized,' or 'ensnared' so as to fall from their steadfastness; so it is used, St. Matt. v. 29, 30; xiii. 21; xviii. 6—9., &c. They were to maintain an uncompromising consistency through evil, and through good report; and not commit the weakness, which cowards and knaves miscall charity, of buying peace from enemies at the expense of truth.

In the epistle St. Peter exhorts us, as Christians waiting for their Lord's coming, to sobriety, watchfulness, prayer, and charity; in accordance with our Lord's words, St. Matt. xxiv. 42—51. Charity, as we are taught in the epistle for Quinquagesima Sunday, is lowly, modest, gentle, unassuming; far different from that contentious spirit which seeks pre-eminence, and causes divisions in the Church. "Charity seeketh not its own;" still less will it intrude into the office of another.

The "gift" concerning which St. Peter exhorts, is that spoken of by St. Paul, 1 Tim. iv. 14; and 2 Tim. i. 6; the gift of the ministry; which is farther evident from the character he applies to them who possess it; "good stewards of the manifold grace of God;" compare 1 Cor. iv. 1. If they are stewards of God, they must derive their charge from Him. No presumed personal ability can be accepted as a substitute for a lawful call. This power cannot be in the people; for if they can make their minister, they may also govern him; which, though usurped by the voluntary principle, is contrary to all Scripture. Nor can it be allowed that individuals should decide upon their own competency, and so assume the office. All observation shews that self-sufficiency is ever the companion of ignorance, while modesty attends superior knowledge.

The apostle adds, "if any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God." The term must refer chiefly to the books of the Old Testament; for, of the New Testament, the epistles to the Galatians and Thessalonians, and perhaps the gospel of St. Matthew, were the only books then written. No part of the Old Testament sets forth more clearly and forcibly our duties, as children of God, and members of his Church, than the book of Deuteronomy; because it contains the last instructions of the great Lawgiver of the Jews. In this book he gives a summary of that moral law, of which our Lord declared that "till heaven and earth pass, one jot, or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law;" in connexion with a system of ecclesiastical discipline ordained by God himself. To some essentials of this discipline, the lessons for the day refer.

The morning lesson entirely condemns the voluntary principle. The Israelites were not allowed to make their offerings to God where they pleased, but only in his appointed place. They were not to make to themselves ministers of religion, but to support, and attend to those whom God had ordained: "Take heed to thyself that thou forsake not the Levite as long as thou livest upon the earth." Against the pretence of private judgment, or conscience, in excuse of deviations from the written word of God, it is declared, "What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it."

The evening lesson condemns another

important fallacy of the voluntary principle;—that a man has no concern with the opinions and faith of others. For not only were the Israelites required to be faithful themselves, but also to resist, denounce, and punish all who would ensnare them to idolatry, or who should corrupt or deny the true faith. The reason is declared in the two last verses; that the blessing of God, upon which the general prosperity of the State, and therefore that of every member of it, depends, would be poured forth, or withheld, as the nation honoured, or neglected Him. The peculiar circumstances of the Jewish polity, which required such offenders to be cut off by the sword of the magistrate, exist not under the gospel; but national prosperity still depends upon national religion. Therefore it is the duty and the interest of every man to promote this to the extent of his influence; the peasant in the little family of his cottage; the King through the great family of his realm. And as we know from the Bible that God imparts his blessings chiefly through his Church, the State is bound to promote and encourage this effectually; bringing its ministrations within every one's reach, and firmly restraining whatever would oppose it.

There is a passage in the morning lesson, v. 8, &c., which alludes to the irregular manner in which the rites of the law were observed during the journeying in the wilderness. In particular, we know that Circumcision, and the Passover were suspended, by God's appointment we may be sure, until the Jews arrived in Canaan. The first could not have been safely performed while they were in the act of travelling; unleavened bread would be wanting for the second. Advantage might indeed have been taken of the frequent long rests to circumcise at a later period than the eighth day; and manna might have supplied the place of unleavened bread: but we find that God chose to suspend these important sacraments altogether, until they could be properly observed in every circumstance, rather than allow the smallest deviation from his appointment. For such is the perverseness of man, that the change which necessity at first seemed to require is made a precedent for greater innovation, till order is destroyed, and truth forgotten. This fact completely meets the plea of those who would excuse the flagrant irregularity of lay baptism, by arguing the importance of the Sacrament, and the necessity of administering it at all events, if a lawful minister cannot be obtained. God does not require impossibilities; nor is He restrained to his appointed means of grace for imparting his covenanted blessings, when these means are omitted from inevitable necessity, and not from contumacy, or carelessness. But He does require that we respect the order of his Church, and interfere with none of his appointments.

When we observe how strictly God commanded exact adherence to all the rites of the Jewish Church, and with what jealous displeasure He marked any deviation therefrom; and yet this was only the type, of which the Christian Church is the fulfilment; that being temporary; this, everlasting; that, consecrated with the blood of calves and of goats; this, with the sacrifice of the Son of God; that, brought by the ministry of Moses, this brought by Jesus Christ, and established in the Holy Ghost; who, by the Apostles, continually and emphatically insists upon its unity and peace; can it be supposed that God regards the order of this glorious Church, the image of heaven itself, as a thing so indifferent, that any man may model it according to his own fancy; that he may secure the covenanted blessings of the Gospel in ways of his own choosing: and that intrusion into sacred offices, a sin so heinous under the Law, that the offender was struck down with sudden judgment, is now to be regarded as a holy duty?

XXXVII.

Within thy temple's hallow'd bound
Thy power and love, great God, are known;
For there the mercy-seat is found,
And grace and truth support thy throne.

There, in the Spirit of the Lord,
Their strength and hope till time shall end,
Thy ministers declare thy word,
And we the welcome call attend.

Oh bright display of love divine!
Oh happy souls who claim a part!
May we improve these gifts of thine,
With lowly mind, and thankful heart.

Here may we join to praise and pray;
Here peace and love be ever known:
Lord, may we never leave thy way,
And dare to seek Thee in our own!

WHIT-SUNDAY.

The Gift of the Holy Ghost.

Morning Lesson . .	Deut. xvi. 1—17.
	Acts x. 34—48.
Evening Lesson . .	Isaiah xi.
	Acts xix. 1—20.
Epistle	Acts ii. 1—11.
Gospel	St. John xiv. 15—31.
Proper Psalms . .	Morning, xlviii. lxviii.
	Evening, civ. cxlv.

The first morning lesson enjoins the observance of the three great feasts, when all the males of Israel were required to appear before the Lord. One of these was the feast of Weeks, or Pentecost, so called, because it began on the fiftieth day after the Passover, reckoning from the day after the paschal Sabbath. This corresponds with the day on which the Law was given from Sinai; and thus adds another to the many exact parallels between the rites and circumstances of the Law and the Gospel. The first evening lesson foretells the coming, lowliness, and dominion of Christ, the offspring, yet the root of Jesse. It predicts that the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, with its sevenfold gifts, as they are enumerated in the office of confirmation;—a spirit of wisdom, to approve the good, and of understanding, to pursue it by right means; of counsel, to form holy resolutions, and of ghostly strength, to bring the same to good effect; of knowledge, and of godliness to sanctify it; and, finally, of godly fear, the beginning of wisdom, and the way of safety. The lesson proceeds to describe the peace and love which shall prevail in the reign of the Gospel, the glory of the Church, the gathering of the Gentiles, and the restoration of Israel. The gospel contains our Lord's promise to send the Comforter. The epistle describes his coming on the day of Pentecost. The second morning lesson relates how the Holy Ghost was first given to the Gentiles. The second evening lesson shews the connexion between ordinances and blessings, in the gift of the Holy Ghost, not till after their baptism, to certain persons, who had for many years believed. It also shews, in the punishment of the sons of Sceva, the presumption and weakness of such, as attempt the work of God unqualified, and unsent. Of the proper Psalms, the xlviii. exults in the safety and glory of the Church. The lxviii. praises God for the deliverance from Egypt, and the guidance through the wilderness; rejoices in the establishment of the Church; foretells the ascension and victory of Christ, and the gifts of the Holy Ghost; celebrates the triumphal procession and settlement of the Ark in Mount Sion, and the union of all the tribes of Israel in one; and, finally, anticipates the destruction of every enemy, the establishment of universal peace, and the gathering together of all people and kingdoms to God. The civ. praises God for the abundance, variety, and richness of the gifts wherewith He hath blessed the earth; and the cxlv. well connects with it; for it represents all the works of the Lord praising Him for his power and goodness, and his saints blessing Him for the more exceeding excellence of his spiritual gifts, and the glories of his kingdom.

After this general summary, we may briefly consider what was imparted by the extraordinary manifestation of the Holy Ghost,—what important objects it secured,—and, finally, what it was not.

It cleared the minds of the Apostles from all worldly notions of the Messiah's kingdom, which we find, Acts i. 6, that they cherished even after the Resurrection; and enlightened their understandings to know the truth and application of his doctrine, and the connexion of the Old Testament therewith. It conferred the gift of tongues, which enabled them, according to the commission they had previously received, to go and teach all nations. It gave them that courage, chastened with prudence, which their holy warfare required. Hitherto they have been dull, weak, timid, and even contentious: henceforth they are wise, affectionate, and intrepid. It invested them with the power of working miracles in a much greater degree than they had hitherto possessed; and established their hearts in peace, according to the promise of their Lord.

In a word, it gave them wisdom to know the truth, the gift of tongues to impart it, miraculous powers to attest it, courage to animate, prudence to guide, and peace to confirm them in their arduous mission.

The objects gained were very important. It confirmed the Gospel by the most decisive evidence. If a cavil were raised against the Resurrection, because the Lord had shewn himself only to his disciples, all doubt must be removed when the fact was attested by the miracle of unlettered men suddenly acquiring a thorough knowledge of languages, with power to impart the same gift to others who received their doctrine.

It provided for the Church the multitude of competent teachers which its sudden and vast extension required. "The Lord gave the word, great was the company of the preachers." Ps. lxviii. 11. At this time, and for many years after, none of the books of the New Testament were written; and a short course of oral instruction would clearly be insufficient to qualify a converted Jew, or heathen, to teach others. But the gift of prophesying imparted that knowledge which, in after ages, would be attained to by the diligent use of the Scriptures; and, at the same time, tongues conferred that power which was afterwards to be gained by study; while miracles were an effectual means of arresting attention, overcoming prejudice, and disposing to a favourable reception of the new system.

It was a means of deciding various important questions. Among these may, perhaps, be noticed the abrogation of the Jewish Sabbath, and the substitution of the first day of the week; which, already hallowed by the Resurrection, was now additionally sanctified by the gift of the Comforter. Thus the will of God was declared, and the Jewish prejudices of the Apostles and the Church were removed, when the Gentiles should be fully admitted; as it is recorded in the second morning lesson. So the fact related in the second evening lesson proved that baptism is the appointed means whereby we enter the Church, and obtain a title to its privileges. In short, these extraordinary manifestations of the Spirit shewed in what channels his ordinary gifts were to flow, and by what means they should be communicated or obtained.

The last consideration, and not the least important is, what this operation was not.

It was distinct from those ordinary workings of the Spirit, whereby he strives with all men, and perfects such as be sanctified. These quiet and holy influences are from the beginning to the end of time; whereas the gifts of the day of Pentecost were temporary, to meet the wants of an infant Church. We find even, from the conduct of the Corinthians, that these gifts themselves required to be hallowed, and subdued with humility and charity, lest they should lift up to pride, and provoke to contention.

It did not confer the office of the Ministry. With this the Apostles had been already invested by Christ himself, as it is described in St. John, xx. 21—23.

It did not remove all their prejudices, nor impart to them all knowledge, even to the extent of understanding the Scriptures fully. It was ten years after that they first understood God's gracious purposes towards the Gentiles; and then an extraordinary revelation was required to instruct them.

Nor did it destroy their natural frailty. This is proved, by the negligence of St. Mark, and the contention of St. Paul and St. Barnabas, Acts xv. 37—39; the dissimulation of St. Peter, Gal. ii. 11—14; the possibility declared by St. Paul, 1 Cor. ix. 27, that he might become a castaway; and especially, by the great disorders which prevailed in the Church at Corinth.

Finally, it did not reveal what might be learned by the diligent use of the natural faculties. Thus St. Paul, after he had been miraculously converted, and had received the Holy Ghost, entered not immediately on his ministry, but went into Arabia, Gal. i., not to rest, for his character forbids the supposition; nor to preach, for we hear nothing of his labours, and the door was not yet opened to the Gentiles. Three years elapsed before he joined the apostles at Jerusalem. Latterly, indeed, he was employed at Damascus, but not for a long period,—compare the mode of expression, Acts ix. 23, with that, Acts xvi. 18, and xviii. 2. The malice of the Jews, which obliged him to flee for his life, would not have slumbered long; and if he had been publicly preaching there, the disciples at Jerusalem

could not have remained ignorant of the fact, and consequently of his change of character, even for a few weeks, the distance being little more than 100 miles. The inference therefore is, that the interval was chiefly employed in preparing himself for his office by study, meditation, and prayer. It may be added, that though expressly chosen to be the apostle of the Gentiles, he was called six years before God opened the door to them by the baptism of Cornelius.

The consideration of this subject encourages to holy confidence, by teaching us that, whether in the conflict with our spiritual enemies, or in the more extensive duties of Christian charity, God can supply all our deficiencies, and make the weakest agents effectual. It warns against presumption, by shewing that he gives this help, not to enable ignorance to compete with knowledge, and indolence with industry; but to impart what none could acquire by their unaided talents and labour; and also, that his help, where most abundantly given, is so far from dispensing with our own exertion, that it requires the more strenuous and persevering efforts to improve it.

The order of the Church preserves us from the scandal of men without learning, parts, or leisure, intruding themselves into the ministry, and deceiving themselves with the fancy, that the Spirit will supply their deficiencies: but the enthusiasm is equally dangerous to the individual, though less mischievous to others, which looks for spiritual improvement, without personal labour; and the blessing of the Holy Ghost, without the diligent use of the appointed means of grace. The teaching of the Spirit makes us wise, not by inspiring our indolence, but by blessing our diligence. The comfort of the Spirit fills us with peace, not while we sit down to dream of heaven, but when, setting our affection there, we are up and doing to prepare for it. The help of the Spirit is given, not to spare our labour, but to enable us to overcome when we strive and contend. By his special grace preventing us, he puts into our mind good desires; but we must cherish, improve, and strenuously act upon them, if we would obtain his help to bring the same to good effect.

XXXVIII.

Let God with awful pomp arise,
The glorious God, adored in heaven,
And scatter all his enemies,
Like smoke before the tempest driven.

Let heaven and earth his power confess,
And joyful saints before him bend;
Let songs of praise his goodness bless,
The orphan's hope, the widow's friend.

God hath ascended up on high,
Triumphant over Death, and Hell;
And gifts for rebels from the sky
He claims, that God with man may dwell.

O praise his Name, our hope, our stay,
In whom we live, by whom we stand;
Whose presence guards us through the way,
And leads us to the promis'd land.

Psalm lxviii.

MONDAY IN WHITSUN-WEEK.

The right improvement of spiritual gifts.

Morning Lesson . .	Genesis xi. 1—9 1 Cor. xii.
Evening Lesson . .	Numbers xi. 16—29. 1 Cor. xiv.
Epistle	Acts x. 34—48.
Gospel	St. John iii. 16—21.

The services for Monday and Tuesday in Whitsun-week, present various important lessons concerning the nature, and right use, of the manifold gifts of the Spirit.

The morning lesson refers to the gift of speech, which, being necessary to man as a reasonable and religious being, was, with all needful knowledge, imparted at first by inspiration. By this, Adam, on the day he was made, gave names to the animals. Again, when God would defeat the presumption of men at Babel, He caused them suddenly to forget their language, and gave them new and diverse tongues, which at once broke them into distinct tribes, and dispersed them. This diversity of speech made the gift of tongues necessary to propagate the Gospel: the three miracles, in effect, are the same. And since speech and languages may now be acquired by the use of our natural faculties, neither of them continued to be miraculously imparted after the first necessity had ceased.

The evening lesson, in the fact and circumstances of the ordination of the seventy elders, affords an example of the transmission of spiritual power and authority, derived from God, and perpetuated by communication through an authorized human channel. In this respect, and in the appointment by selection, and not hereditary descent, it agrees with the Christian ministry. One point claims particular attention. Since these elders were to receive supernatural aid, the meanest in the congregation might thus have been qualified for the office. But we find, v. 16, that only those were to be appointed who were already distinguished in Israel, elders and officers over the people. God, who is the God of order, requires that nothing be neglected in the government of his Church whereby it may be honoured.

From the second morning lesson we learn that the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit were diverse, and divided among the disciples, to the intent that all should thus be mutually dependent upon one another, and so their common interest should unite them in one, as the members of one body. This perfect unity in the Church is farther enforced by the consideration, that the diversities of gifts are from one Spirit; the difference of administrations, or orders and offices in the ministry, from one Lord; and the diversities of operations, or duties we are to perform, through one God, who worketh all in all. Hence it is evident that whatever tends to divisions in the Church, proceeds from error and evil. The apostle sums up the argument, by enforcing the holy principle by which unity is preserved, namely, charity: which he declares to be more excellent than all gifts, and which in the following chapter, —used for the epistle on Quinquagesima Sunday,—he describes in its nature, application, and blessedness, giving to it the pre-eminence as the greatest of all virtues; and that, without which, all others are in vain.

The second evening lesson teaches that all spiritual gifts are to be used to edification, and therefore gives the superiority to prophesying or teaching, because it is the most useful. All the others in fact were subordinate to this: for their object was to qualify the teacher to impart, or to dispose the ignorant to receive, the truth which by this gift was obtained. "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy," Rev. xix. 10. It also expressly condemns speaking in the congregation in an unknown tongue; a prohibition which the Romanists may find it difficult to reconcile with their practice.

The epistle has been already used on Easter Monday for the doctrine of the Resurrection which it contains; and on Whitsunday, because it describes the giving of the Holy Ghost to the Gentiles. It is repeated to-day, for the important fact that these Gentiles were baptized after they had received the gift of the Holy Ghost; and therefore, that they are greatly in error, who contend that the baptism of the Spirit supersedes the outward administration of the sacrament.

The gospel affirms the sufficiency of the means of grace which God hath given, and supplies an answer to those scoffers, who sink the authority of truth to that of mere individual opinion; affirming that whatever a man believes is truth to himself. Our Lord declares on the contrary, that unbelief arises, not from want of light, or deficiency of understanding, but from corruption of the heart. "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil."

XXXIX.

Thy sacred influence, Lord, impart;
Let all the Church thy gifts improve;
Diffuse thy grace through ev'ry heart,
And perfect us in christian love.

Thus, join'd in fellowship below,
Diff'ring in gifts, in spirit one,
How blest the union we shall know,
When all shall meet around thy Throne!

TUESDAY IN WHITSUN-WEEK.

The influence of the Spirit upon the Church.

Morning Lesson . .	1 Samuel xix. 18—24. 1 Thess. v. 12—23.
Evening Lesson . .	Deuteronomy xxx. 1 John iv. 1—13.
For the Epistle . .	Acts viii. 14—17.
Gospel	St. John x. 1—10.

Hitherto, we have considered the operations

of the Spirit to enlighten, sanctify, and comfort, God's faithful people. The morning lesson to-day calls our attention to another work — his controlling the purposes and thoughts of their enemies. The rage and hatred of Saul against David hurried him to such excess, that he would have taken him by violence from the sanctuary of the prophets, and the protection of Samuel himself. But when he went to execute his wicked purpose, after his messengers had been successively restrained, in spite of his natural resolution, and the desperate malignity of his heart, he found himself under the irresistible influence of a superior power, and compelled to praise God with those whom he came to destroy. This is recorded for our encouragement, and set before us this day, to shew how fearlessly we should do all that God requires; since the hearts even of his enemies and ours are in his hand.

The evening lesson, having anticipated the scattering of the Jews through all nations of the earth, according to the terrible threatenings of the twenty-eighth chapter, promises a happy restoration upon their repentance; with blessings both political, and spiritual. "The Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart," &c. v. 6. He calls their attention to the fact, that the truth by which they have wisdom and power to serve God rightly, is within them, even in their heart; v. 11—14; a passage which the apostle applies, Romans x. 4—12, to that saving faith in Christ, by which at length they shall know him, and be united in one Church with the Gentiles.

In the second morning lesson, we learn our duties as members of the Church:—to honour and esteem very highly in love those whom Christ hath set over us: to preserve peace, restraining the disorderly: to practise all the duties of charity: to rejoice, pray, and give thanks continually: neither to resist the monitor within, nor to despise the instruction of our teachers: to prove all things, and hold fast that which is good: to follow after perfect holiness, and avoid even the appearance of evil.

"Prove all things;" and St. John in the second evening lesson, gives the rule by which we are to examine and decide. The test of the Spirit is not confident assurance, with which many flatter and deceive themselves; nor yet the extravagancies of a heated imagination, and the excited feelings of strong animal passions stimulating a weak mind. It is the possession of a sound faith, according to the Scriptures; proved and adorned by unfeigned love to God and man.

The portion appointed for the epistle refers to an important means whereby we obtain spiritual help to fulfil our baptismal obligations; the laying on of hands, or confirmation. This mode of conferring spiritual blessings obtained as early as the patriarchal times, Genesis xlviii. 14—20; and was appointed by God himself, Numbers xxvii. 18, and 23. St. Paul places it among the principles of the doctrine of Christ next in order after baptism, Hebrews vi. 2. The importance which the apostles attached to it is evident, from the power being exercised only by themselves. Thus, when Samaria had received the word through the preaching of Philip, that eminent evangelist presumed not to lay hands on the converts whom he had baptised. This was done by Peter and John, who were sent from Jerusalem by the apostles for that purpose. So with the disciples mentioned at Acts xix. 1—7, though St. Paul appointed others to baptize them, 1 Corinthians i. 14, yet he reserved to himself the laying on of hands, that they might receive the Holy Ghost. Therefore this power hath always been restricted to the bishops, as the successors of the apostles. It has been observed already that one use of the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit was to indicate how, and to whom, his ordinary gifts should be imparted.

In the gospel, our Lord declares himself the only door, by which any may enter into his sheepfold, the Church, either as a shepherd to guide, or as sheep to find pasture. He then describes the particulars which characterize a true and faithful minister:—that he believes, and teaches the very doctrine of Christ; "he entereth in by the door:" that he is admitted in an orderly and lawful manner; "to him the porter openeth:" that he concerns himself for his flock individually, so as to discriminate and supply their several wants; "he calleth his own sheep by name:" that he makes himself in all things their example; "he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him:" that he is careful so to establish their hearts

and minds in the truth, that they may know and shun whatever would mislead them; "a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him; for they know not the voice of strangers."

Thus the services for the day trace the influence of the Spirit in perfecting the Church of Christ: shewing the character of a true and faithful minister thereof:—the faith, character, and duties of its members:—an important means whereby we receive spiritual help in it, namely, the laying on of hands:—its security, in that God can overrule the very malice of its deadly enemies, and turn their wrath to his praise:—and its hope, in the gathering in of the outcasts of Israel, when all the earth, both Jews and Gentiles, shall be united in the faith of Christ.

And now, that we may consider profitably the instructions imparted to us at this season, and obtain the wisdom and comfort which we implore in the Collect, let us cherish a solemn sense of our baptismal vow, and a thankful remembrance of the manifold blessings which God imparts to us in his Church, by the influence of the Holy Ghost, and through the ministrations of his servants. And knowing how greatly the prosperity of the Church, and our own welfare, are connected with faithful ministers, for the ordaining of whom this is an appointed season, let us join most fervently in the prayer, that Almighty God, the giver of all good gifts; who of his divine providence hath appointed divers orders in his Church, may give his grace to all those who are to be called to any office and administration in the same; and so replenish them with the truth of his doctrine, and endue them with innocency of life, that they may faithfully serve before Him, to the glory of his great name, and the benefit of his holy Church, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

XL.

To bring me to this hallow'd shrine,
With pious care my parents came;
To mark me with the Christian sign;
To bless me with the Christian name.
'Twas here the sacred pledge was given;
And solemnly, for me preferred,
The fervent prayer arose to heaven:—
And may I hope that prayer was heard!

Enthroned in majesty on high,
The Ancient of eternal days,
Our God regards the feeble cry;
And listens to the infants' praise.
Their souls are ransom'd with his blood;
The emblems of his promis'd rest;
Nor dare we from his Church exclude
Those whom on earth the Saviour bless'd.

Loved, honor'd Church! his saving grace
The Lord thy God displays in thee:
I'll worship in thy holy place,
And pray for thy prosperity:
Built on his everlasting word,
Stand, as for ages thou hast stood;
Thine be the blessings of the Lord,
And blest be all who seek thy good.

TRINITY SUNDAY.

The Trinity in Unity.

Morning Lesson . . .	Genesis i.
	St. Matthew iii.
Evening Lesson	Genesis xviii.
	1 John v.
For the Epistle . . .	Revelation iv.
Gospel	St. John iii. 1—15.

That glorious mystery which human thought cannot fathom; which only Revelation could make known, yet in which God's people, receiving it with submissive and adoring faith, find their hope, strength, and comfort; the glory of the eternal Trinity, which we acknowledge and confess, in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, three persons; while "we worship the Unity in the power of the Divine Majesty, one God; is commemorated by the Church to-day. The appointed portions of Scripture establish the doctrine, and practically apply it.

The morning lesson describes the three Persons in the Godhead concurring in the work of Creation. "In the beginning God created the heaven, and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep." The first creative act was to call matter into existence: but it was yet chaos, shapeless, confused, unconnected.

"And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." This sentence, being made a clause of a verse, and beginning with

the particle "and," is commonly read as if it were only a part of what precedes it. But it is a new subject, preceded by a full stop. It describes the second creative act; which we may consider to have imparted those distinctive properties to matter, by which it was prepared for the combinations into which it was about to pass. For the word translated "moved" properly means "to brood," as a hen over her nest; and the metaphor explains the action. It was a life-giving operation. As the hen calls forth life in the eggs she covers, by which the unformed mass of fluids becomes an organized and active creature, so the eternal Spirit, covering all Creation with his energy, imparted and developed those active properties, by which chaos was changed into a beautiful and peopled world. It will be observed that the office thus assigned to "the Spirit of God" in the very first passage of the Bible, is that which we are taught in the Gospel, and confess in the Nicene Creed:—that he is "the Lord, and giver of life." "And God said, let there be light, and there was light . . . . and the evening and the morning were the first day." The work of this day was preparatory to that of the five following. Matter was called into being; it was endued with active properties; and the subtle agents were created by which these properties are controlled.*

* The presumption of an infant science, which wrests the Scriptures to make them agree with its own theories, ought not to pass quite unnoticed. Geologists affirm that the two first verses of Genesis describe a Creation which took place at a very remote period; and that the six days' work refers only to a last finishing touch given to the earth, by which it was made fit for the habitation of Man. Yet the fourth commandment declares that "in six days the Lord made heaven and earth;" and how could it be affirmed that He then *made* the earth, if all but the last stratum, a mere film, a nothing, in comparison, had previously existed? Again, Heb. xi. 3. "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." But the Geologists flatly contradict the Apostle: contending, that the primitive rocks, and nearly all the strata which we see, existed thousands, if not millions of years before the six days' work which Moses described, and which the Commandment refers to.

It is not necessary to trace the successive steps of Creation, since nothing applies till the sixth day; when God said, "let *us* make man in *our* image, after *our* likeness." For the use of the plural pronouns here, as well as for the expression which implies consultation, "let *us* make," only one satisfactory reason can be given: the plurality of persons in the Godhead: and, indeed, we find Creation ascribed to the Son in connexion with the Father, in different parts of the New Testament: St. John i. 3, and 10; Ephesians iii. 9; Hebrews i. 2. The expression *us*, also occurs elsewhere, as, "the man is become as one of *us*," Genesis iii. 22; "let *us* go down," xi. 7; "who will go for *us*;" Isaiah vi. 8. So also the word God is a plural noun here, and in other parts of Scripture. Thus, Deuteronomy vi. 4; "Hear, O Israel; the LORD our God is one LORD;" literally, Jehovah, our Gods, is one Jehovah. The constant use of such expressions can be reconciled only with the belief of the plurality of persons in the Unity of the Godhead.

In the evening lesson, the LORD who appeared to Abraham to confirm the promise to the patriarch, and to execute judgment upon Sodom; with whom Abraham interceded for the guilty city, was evidently the Son: for St. John declares, "No man hath seen God at any time;" Gospel i. 18, and 1 Epistle iv. 12; meaning the Father, as the context proves. Abraham addresses him as "the Judge of the whole earth;" but Christ declares that "the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son." Here then we see Christ in his twofold character;—the Saviour, bringing redemption to his people; and the Judge, executing justice upon the impenitent and incorrigible.

That which is only indicated in the former dispensation is clearly revealed in the New Testament. In the second morning lesson, the Godhead in three Persons is manifested;—the Son, entering upon his ministry by baptism: the Spirit, descending in a bodily form upon him: and the Father, declaring from heaven, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

The truth is declared in the second evening lesson, which points to God, the Father of all, with the blessing and duty of those who are

born of Him: to the Spirit of truth, who is the witness of God, abiding in the faithful; and to Jesus Christ, the Son, who is "the true God, and eternal life."

In the portion appointed for the epistle, heaven is opened; and St. John hears the cherubim praising God continually in the words which Isaiah before heard and recorded; Isaiah vi. 3; "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts;" a form of expression by which the Christian Church hath always understood the adoration paid to the three persons in the Godhead; and therefore, from the first ages, hath made a part of the office of the Holy Communion.

The gospel describes, and in the words of our Lord himself, the several offices of the three Persons of the Trinity in our salvation; and with this intention, it will be more complete, if we consider with it the two following verses of the chapter to the 17th. For originally, this day was observed only as the octave of Pentecost, and the services were chiefly designed in honour of the Holy Spirit. The Collect now used is little more than a thousand years old, while the epistle and gospel assigned to the more ancient festival, are retained. Thus extending the passage, we adore the love of God the Father, who "so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son" for our salvation. We believe in God the Son, who was "lifted up," "as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness," that dying sinners might look unto him, and live: and who in the conversation with Nicodemus, asserts his deity, as "he that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man which is in heaven." We acknowledge the Holy Spirit, by whom we are regenerated and made the sons of God. Which true faith may we have grace firmly to believe and confess, till we come to his heavenly kingdom; where we shall understand the mysteries which now confound us; and "know, even as we are known."

XLI.

To God the Father, God the Son,
And God the Spirit, Three in One,
In heaven and earth adored,
Our hearts, and hands, and lips we raise,
In humble prayer, and grateful praise,
And own our Sov'reign Lord.

Father! Redeemer! Heavenly Guide!
May we by faith in Thee abide,
Till we thy face shall see;—
Join'd to the bright angelic powers;
Their love, their songs, their glory, ours,
Through all eternity!

XLII.

Great God! whose awful mystery,
Though yet unknown, our hearts believe,
Our wants and cares we bring to Thee,
And all thy words in faith receive:
Thy truths, for human reach too high!
Our comfort, hope, and strength supply.

Father! thy goodness we confess,
Which gave, and still preserves our breath:
Incarnate Son! when sins oppress,
We plead the merits of thy death:
And, lost in darkness, guilt, and woe,
Spirit! thy help and joy we know.

Thus to thy strength our weakness clings,
And always finds the promise sure:
Our conscious heart the witness brings;
And thus, believing, we adore;
Till death shall take the vail away,
And faith be lost in perfect day.

XLIII.

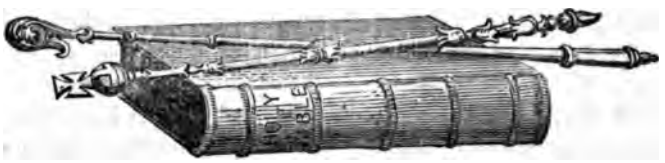
Father! whose love and truth fulfil
Thy covenant in Abraham's seed,
Confirm in us the sacred seal,
And make our children thine indeed.

Jesus! through thine appointed rite,
The promised grace we humbly claim:
Children were lovely in thy sight;
And Lord, thy love is still the same.

Thou, who, descending from above,
Didst rest on God's beloved Son,
Eternal Spirit! holy Dove!
Perfect thy work in them begun.

Thrice Holy Lord! thy name we bear;
Oh be thy children's blessing given;
The grace, to serve Thee truly here;
A portion with Thy saints in heaven.

CHURCH AND KING.



"FEAR GOD—HONOUR THE KING."

No. IX. JUNE 1, 1837.

THE CHURCH AND DISSENT,

CONSIDERED IN THEIR PRACTICAL INFLUENCE.

CHAPTER VII.

(continued.)

V. On the subject of personal religion, it should be said, that we have no right to constitute ourselves judges of the piety of individuals, except in as far as their conduct makes it impossible to mistake their principles. But we can have little difficulty in deciding if certain systems be favourable, or otherwise, to piety, because we can easily determine their influence upon what may be called the elements of personal religion. Faith, humility, charity, and spirituality, or heavenly-mindedness, are essentials: for faith is the substance of religion: without humility, there can be neither true repentance, nor a sense of dependence upon God: where love to the brethren is not, we know from the Bible that the love of God cannot be; and a mind fixed upon heavenly objects, and governed by spiritual motives, is necessary, to preserve us from being ensnared by the deceits of the world, and defiled by its pollutions.

Faith in Christ is not mere speculative belief, but a principle of continual practical application; the very substance of Christianity. Redeemed by his sacrifice, we are justified before God. Saved by his triumph, we are delivered from our spiritual enemies. Joined to him, as members of one body, of which he is the living head, we derive from him strength to overcome the world, and to be abundantly fruitful to God's glory. By him we have access to the Father; whose love, manifested in the gift of his Son, encourages us to draw near, when our weakness would shrink from the presence of infinite Majesty, and conscious guilt would tremble before a just and holy God. We offer up our prayers in his name, who ever intercedes for us: we walk after his example, who made himself partaker of our nature, and infirmities. And as the whole Christian system is filled with him, from the first promise after the Fall, to the day when he shall come to judgment, so he is the Alpha and Omega to every Christian; who lives to God only while he derives spiritual life from Christ. Faith is not the lazy notion that a man may with careless confidence throw his burden upon the Saviour, and trouble himself no farther; a pillow upon which he lulls his conscience to sleep, till he drops into perdition; but a living, and vigorous principle, working by love, and inseparably connected with true repentance as its motive, and with holy obedience as its fruits: by which the Christian surely appropriates all the blessings of the Gospel; contends manfully against all his enemies, the world, the flesh, and the devil; and rejoices in hope of heaven; till his warfare at length is ended, and he receives an inheritance of rest and a crown of glory.

It is thus, that with gratitude and adoration, the Church sets forth the Saviour in all her services; while she especially commemorates those events of his life upon which important doctrines depend, by a series of festivals, of which the appointed Scripture lessons set forth the fact, the types and prophecies, the doctrine, and the application.

Christ is dishonoured by Popery, which makes our own works a meritorious cause of justification; denies the full efficacy of his atonement, by teaching that every man must complete the work of expiating his sins in purgatory; gives to a priest the power of remitting by a pretended sacrifice this expiatory suffering, which the one offering of Christ was insufficient to avert; and ascribes his power and office as an intercessor to a multitude of inferior mediators.

Christ is rejected by those who regard him as a mere creature, however high the office, which, as a prophet, and a teacher, they would assign to him. This heresy strikes at the foundation of the Christian's hope; and denies all those doctrines, which derive their power and efficacy from the deity of our Lord.

It is natural that these should assail the Church, opposed as she is to the heresies they maintain; but that orthodox dissenters should encourage, and aid their attacks, is indeed a theme for sorrow. That they *endure* such an unhallowed league, is a fatal proof that their views of Christian truth are far less distinct than they ought to be; for else, they could never set it aside for an object of mere party.

This painful conclusion is confirmed, by the alliance which has so long subsisted between the orthodox, and the socinian ministers in London. They have been united in one body, with a common secretary; and the socinians, though only one-sixth of the number, have been allowed a decided lead. It is not necessary to argue on the baneful *consequences* of such an union. It never could have existed, if the orthodox ministers had been duly impressed with the truths they taught. Unless the great work, to which their every thought should be directed,—calling sinners to repentance, and establishing them in the faith of Christ,—had been second in their minds to the party object of attacking the Church, they would have shrunk instinctively from whatever could imply the most indirect sanction of a heresy, which strikes at the foundation of their hope as Christians, and of their power as ministers.

It has been urged in extenuation, that the union had reference only to secular objects, and the protection of their common rights. But to a religious body, no secular object could be worth the tremendous price of compromising the faith. Has there been *no* religious union, however? I have seen within the last two years a list of ministers, including socinians, with independents and baptists, who were appointed to occupy on successive Sundays the pulpit connected with a general dissenting charity. The Board of dissenting deputies took shares in the "London University," avowedly for the advantage of students for the ministry. Nor indeed would it be possible to divest of its religious character an organized union of the ministers of sects, which have no existence except as religious societies.

When churchmen, a few years since, united so generally with dissenters, they thought, that meeting upon what they deemed neutral ground, they risked and compromised nothing. But principles that may be laid aside for a time, sink in importance to the level of expediency. Uniting with dissenters, churchmen became lukewarm in Church principles. So, joining with Socinians, dissenters inevitably become lukewarm in Christian truth.

This union has very lately been dissolved; not, however, upon the point of principle, but because of a dispute for precedence. In the election of a secretary, the orthodox body ventured to oppose the socinian nominee, and to elect a candidate of their own; upon which the parties quarrelled. What subserviency was here! Socinianism had tainted the principles of Dissent, brought scandal upon its character, and robbed it of its endowments; yet the great body of London dissenters have allowed a very few socinian ministers to exercise such absolute domination, that it was deemed presumption, when they claimed a turn to elect a subordinate officer. How tamely submissive that majority must hitherto

have been! And these have proclaimed themselves the champions of religious liberty!

Observing how greatly Socinianism has prevailed wherever the democratic form of church government exists; at Geneva, in America, and in almost all the endowed Meetings in England; while the Church, and Wesleyan Methodism have remained so free from it, it would be evident, even if the fact had not been declared in Scripture, that there is a very close connexion between democracy and heresy. That self-will, which resists the authority God has ordained, will question the truth He has revealed; and it is just, that they who turn away from the light, should be left to stumble in darkness.

It is fearful to reflect how entirely a dissenting congregation depends upon the personal competency of the minister; and supposing him competent, how entirely he depends upon them for permission to be faithful. There must be the ability to teach, and the willingness to be instructed; else, instead of a faith, resting upon knowledge, and working by love, there will be nothing but party zeal. Christian truth can exist only as a living principle. When it ceases to warm, and move the heart, it perishes: and a dead body soon turns to corruption.

The practical evils, which arise out of that supremacy of private judgment upon which Dissent is founded, extend yet farther. It places religious distinctions, and all modes of sect, faith, and worship, upon the lowest possible ground, that of individual opinion; and makes the choice of one, or another, a question of mere preference, to be determined by taste, or convenience. If a dissenter be offended in his own Meeting, or attracted by the talents of another minister, he changes his sect without hesitation; and justifies himself upon the plea, that he must go where he can hear with most profit, that is to say, where he is the best pleased. Persons who set the popular talents of a minister above all other considerations, and hold thus loosely articles of belief, which are deemed sufficiently important to divide sects, are little likely to have very definite views of those, which are essential to salvation. Indeed, rules of faith can hardly be insisted on, where the supremacy of private judgment is asserted. One only check would be at all effectual, to counteract the evils of this most extravagant libertinism—to instruct the people fully in the Scriptures. But the Bible is little used in the Meeting-house. Every thing there gives place to the sermon: and thus the flock stray from the green pastures and living waters provided by their heavenly Shepherd; while their overseer is required to go with them wherever they choose to wander; feeding and swelling them with flatulent and unwholesome food, till they rot and perish.

Why Socinianism has not more extensively prevailed is caused by its chilling, lifeless character. The uneducated feel more than they reason; and if we would gain their judgment, we must reach it through the heart. Hence, whenever a cold rationality gains possession of the pulpit, it is sure to empty the pews. If the Meeting depend for support upon the congregation, steps must then be taken to revive the cause, either by changing the minister, or by some other mode of excitement; but if it be endowed, no check exists, and the minister, with the influential few, may slumber on together. It is decisive of the tendency of Dissent, that almost every endowed Meeting has become socinian.

The uneducated themselves, who are repelled by the heresy which denies the Saviour, are very liable to embrace a counterfeit faith, which forms unworthy ideas of him. This is the natural consequence of trusting to extempore declamation, as the chief means of instruction, instead of to the Bible. They learn to talk of him as if he were pleading like a beggar for their suffrage, upon whom they confer a favour by receiving him: while his love is expressed by sensual imagery which is sometimes even grossly indecent. Popular collections of hymns will afford abundant examples. How different that noble hymn to the Trinity, which the Church uses in her morning service. "Thou art the King of Glory, O Christ! Thou art the everlasting Son of the Father! When thou tookest upon thee to deliver man, thou didst not abhor the virgin's womb; when thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death, thou didst open the kingdom of heaven to all believers; thou sittest at the right hand of God in the glory

of the Father. We believe that thou shalt come to be our Judge. We therefore pray thee help thy servants, whom thou hast redeemed with thy most precious blood. Make them to be numbered with thy saints in glory everlasting."

Humility, and charity, have been alluded to in former chapters. The Church promotes humility in the minister, by the dignity of his office, compared to which, his personal pretensions are thrown into insignificance;—by his direct responsibility to God, which he the more strongly feels, whose attention is not diverted to a dependence upon the people;—and by the purely ministerial character of his office, which determines so strictly the nature and manner of his public duties, as to afford him little occasion for display. She promotes humility in the people, by allowing them no opportunity for pride. They may be penitents, worshippers, disciples, but nothing more; for the Church is independent of their control, the clergyman is beyond their power, and the services are above their criticism.

Dissent fosters pride in the minister, by making the prosperity of the cause depend so entirely upon his talents and exertions, that it is all to his own praise and glory; and by making his own success so depend upon his popularity, as to tempt him to cultivate the arts of display. It fosters pride in the people, by making them judges of their minister, rulers in the "church," and critics in public worship; enabling the young, the ignorant, and the mean, to assume importance as 'church-members;" and encouraging persons in better circumstances to become party leaders. All these things, which undeniably exist, tend naturally, and strongly to pride; and it would be truly wonderful if they produce no effect.

So also with Christian charity. The comprehensive character of a Church, which embraces all men, is calculated to draw out the hearts of her disciples towards all; and her strength and independence leave neither motive, nor encouragement to party feelings. Thus, throughout her services, her prayers for the Church are not offered for herself exclusively, since she regards herself only as a part or branch of the Holy Catholic Church, but expressly "for the whole state of Christ's Church militant here on earth;" and her members have carried out this spirit in practice to such excess, that, giving her enemies credit for better feelings towards her than they possessed, they have cultivated union with them, at the expense of conceding church principles, which they ought never to have compromised.

But in Dissent, Christian charity is an exotic, which individuals may keep alive, but which never could be naturalized to the soil. A repulsive feeling exists towards the world at large; for the Meeting separates itself from the rest of society. A hostile feeling exists towards other Christian bodies; for the exclusive interests, and generally struggling condition of the Meeting, make all neighbouring places of worship, of whatever denomination, rivals; and rivalry, and love, can hardly exist together. Even within its own narrow pale, brotherly love does not find a sanctuary. Witness the quarrels which confessedly tear their "churches" to pieces; quarrels so often occurring, and so easily provoked, as to make it evident, that where there is peace, it is not that love prevails, but only that there is nothing just then to arouse the slumbering elements of discord.

Formalism, as opposed to heavenly-mindedness, abounds too much among all denominations. Professors of religion will everywhere be found, who will keep the world at all events, and gain heaven if they can; and wherever a worldly spirit prevails, be its object wealth, or power, or vanity, devotion will, and can, be nothing more than a dead form. With such persons, direct acts of worship constitute the whole of their religion. But public worship, and all the services, and circumstances, connected with a Christian Church, are only means appointed to an end; the truth learnt, and the strength imparted thereby, being designed so to hallow our daily and hourly duties, that we may pass through this world, as those, whose thoughts and affections are fixed on heaven.

They who attend to the public forms of religion only because the decencies of society require it, are not alluded to here. A deeper censure attaches to them, even that which belongs to the utterly careless and irreligious.

The formalist is sincere in his profession, but he rests upon a false and defective hope; relying upon the observance of external ordinances, while he takes no pains to keep the heart. He loves the world, and is spiritually dead.

To the churchman, the danger of formalism is found in his using the offices and sacraments, not as the appointed means whereby he obtains God's promised blessings, but as constituting the substance of religion itself, and entitling him to salvation. Indeed, multitudes of sincere dissenters entertain the opinion, and it greatly confirms their prejudices, that this most dangerous error prevails very generally in the Church, except in that section of it which is styled "evangelical." They should know, that wherever it may be found, the Church gives no sanction to it. Certainly there is nothing to encourage it in the Liturgy, than which nothing can be more fervent and spiritual; nor yet in the systematic reading of the Holy Scriptures: but the purest forms of devotion will be unfelt while the heart is given to the world. Not, however, that the knowledge of divine truth so acquired is to be deemed useless. As a child, who is receiving a religious education, though yet insensible to its value, is gaining knowledge, and habits, which may hereafter be a blessing; so the formalist, who acquaints himself with the Scriptures, and observes the outward duties of religious worship, taught at length, by trials and disappointments perhaps, to feel the vanity of all he trusted, will, by the truth he has acquired, and the habits he has formed, enter more surely and easily on a truly Christian career. The dry bones are already clothed with flesh; and when the Spirit of God shall breathe upon the body, it will stand and live.

The dissenter is a formalist, whenever he confounds his connexion with the Meeting, the partizanship which grows out of it, and the co-operation, and exertions for its interests, to which this leads, with personal religion. He may justly suspect himself, whenever he is more disposed to dwell on the interests of the Meeting, than to commune with his own heart: whenever he gives his time and thoughts to its service, to the neglect of personal, social, or domestic duties: and most especially and fatally, whenever he shews that he is under the influence of pride, and enmity, by striving for pre-eminence, or promoting contention. His religious feelings and principles are so identified with the interests of his Meeting, which he is continually called to promote in various ways, that he is in great danger of having his attention drawn away from himself. The importance he derives from his services does not lessen this danger; and the zeal of the partizan, whether it refer to a party question within the Meeting, or to rivalry with another, is not always the zeal of the Christian. These are very prone to create a spurious religion, whose principle is vanity, and whose zeal is party excitement. While the one may be gratified, and the other is supplied, none are such shewy professors: but they have no root; and when new motives flatter, and new objects engage the attention, all their religion dies away. Thus the late Mr. Andrew Fuller, Secretary to the Baptist Mission, complained, that students for the ministry too often lost their religion when they were sent to the Academy.* The true explanation would be, that at the Academy their boyish vanity sought the distinction in what it deemed learning and eloquence, which, as "church members," it had found in a forward profession.

Nothing calls for such jealous watchfulness as the iniquity of our holy things! for the

* "I am glad that the Committee have unanimously invited you to the tutorship at Stepney, and that you have been led to accept their invitation.... I know something of Bristol, and Olney, and Bradford;.... but though I am acquainted with these places, yet I know but little of their interior concerns, unless it be what is common to all institutions of this kind, that young men who come to them are seldom overloaded with self-knowledge.

"You will find some of doubtful religion; others inveterately dull; others, destitute of ministerial gifts as a ground to work upon. In either case the party should be dismissed, though in as tender a way as possible.

"A youth with us, goes to the academy, as we suppose, religious, and it may be, really so; but having had nothing like a previous education, he has every thing to learn. Learning is a new world to him, and is in danger of greatly effacing his religion, and of leaving an impression of self-conceit on his future character."—*Published by Dr. Newman, Principal of Stepney Academy, in the Appendix to a "Funeral Sermon for Mr. Fuller."*

worst feelings of the heart will assume the name and garb of virtue, twining themselves about the objects of our devotion. And as nothing in common life is so mischievous as the mistakes of well meaning persons, so nothing is so surely destructive to piety as to encourage worldly tempers, under the impression that they are religious feelings.

VI. There are large classes excluded by the system of Dissent from Christian communion, for whom the Church provides help, and comfort. Such are the multitudes confined to their homes by sickness; sailors, travellers, and all, who by any circumstances of necessity, or duty, are prevented from attending public worship. If they improve the Sabbath by voluntary acts of devotion, still this is only private, and solitary. But in using the appointed services of the day, they may enjoy the blessedness of Christian communion; for thus they unite with the millions, who are receiving instruction, praying, and praising God, in the same words. Thus, worshipping in solitude, they are not lonely; and though separated by oceans and continents from their native land, here is a spell for the heart and memory, calling up the comforts of its Christian Sabbaths, and all the associations which belong to its Christian Temples. Nor is it a small help, to use prescribed offices of devotion, by which the duty is not so liable to be neglected, as if they had to choose for themselves: and it is an additional security against forgetfulness of religion abroad, that its services are among the strongest associations connected with a distant, and beloved home.

An extempore service deprives many, who are able to attend, of the advantage of public worship. All whose hearing is not quick enough to follow the minister, and this is the case with a great proportion of the aged, are only distressed by the attempt. But with the Bible and Prayer-book, they can join in almost all the devotions; and were they ever so deaf, the posture of the congregation, as sitting, standing, or kneeling, would enable them to mark the succession of the different parts of the service.

There is a third class, whose situation claims much sympathy. Strongly attached by habit, or principle, to one communion, they change their residence to where they have no opportunity of worshipping, except in connexion with a party, whom they have been accustomed to regard with prejudice. Their religious feelings, under such circumstances, can hardly fail to be greatly deadened. A still more painful condition arises out of the fluctuating state of Meetings. An individual, after having been long, and sincerely attached to a place of worship, is at length compelled, by circumstances which his correct feelings condemn, to withdraw from it his confidence. Too old to form new habits, so as to join another body of Christians, yet with feelings permanently estranged from the Meeting he attends, for confidence destroyed is not easily restored, he is deprived of the blessings of Christian communion, when he so especially needs their comfort for his declining years.

VII. The last point on which it is necessary to contrast the Church and Dissent, is their respective influence upon the many, who have too little regard for religion even to attend to its decencies; who seldom, or never, enter a place of worship. These, as far as Dissent is concerned, would live and die in utter heathenism; for it offers nothing to arrest their attention. The Meeting, a little community separated from the world, observing much secresy in its proceedings, governed by its own principles and laws, affecting a distinct character, and having nothing in common with the general concerns of society, offers nothing to awaken curiosity; and its theological system has so much of metaphysical refinement in doctrine, conveyed in technical language, and so little of plain practical precept, that it would be as unintelligible to the persons described, as a mathematical lecture to a man ignorant of figures. With the Church, on the other hand, they all have something to do. As the great object of a National Church is to make the State religious, her principles are so identified with government and society, and she has so blended religion with circumstances that force themselves upon every one's attention, as to make ignorance, at least of first principles, almost impossible. All authorities, from the magistrate to the King, publicly acknowledge God as the Supreme Ruler and Judge; from whom

all dignity and power are derived, and to whom all men are accountable. The seasons, and chief festivals of the year, make every one familiar with the fundamental truths of Christianity, which they are appointed to commemorate. These truths are again recognized in the services for marriage, and the burial of the dead; with which, not to speak of baptism, most become acquainted at some time, either for themselves or their friends. The catechism, of which most know something, is simple and intelligible. The commandments, the creed, and the Lord's prayer, stand with unquestionable authority; and the practical application of each can hardly fail to approve itself to the understanding of the most simple, and the conscience of the most profligate. There is nothing exclusive, nothing repulsive, in her faith and worship. No pretensions to superior goodness, and assumption of exclusive right to Christian privileges, by a class, who take upon themselves to determine who shall be admitted to the Lord's table, and who repelled. Her invitations are as general, and as free, as the Gospel itself. Prominent in her position, she compels every one's attention: comprehensive in her spirit, she invites all to her fold: simple in her worship, she offers truths, before which the wisest bow, in a form which the young and the unlearned may understand. Thus, to recapitulate, presenting the features and character of the Gospel; and displaying through all her history the marks of God's care, and peculiar blessing, the Church is the source of intellectual and moral greatness to individuals, the bond of society, the excellency of the Nation, and the bulwark of Religion.

THE CHURCH ESTABLISHED ON THE BIBLE;

OR, THE DOCTRINES AND DISCIPLINE OF THE CHURCH SHEWN, IN THE ORDER AND CONNEXION OF THE SERVICES SHE APPOINTS FROM THE SCRIPTURES.

THE SUNDAYS AFTER TRINITY.

HAVING completed that portion of the Christian year which treats more particularly of doctrines, we now begin a course of subjects more entirely practical. The same accordance will be found between all the parts of each service; with an orderly arrangement of the successive services, though in a less degree than we have hitherto observed. Most of them will admit of being treated briefly, because they teach chiefly by examples, which are easily understood.

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

God is our helper and strength; holy service and brotherly love are the return which he requires.

Morning Lesson . .	Joshua x.
Evening Lesson . .	Joshua xxiii.
Epistle	1 St. John iv. 7—21.
Gospel	St. Luke xvi. 19—31.

This, and the next Sunday, have a very close relation to the services for Whitsuntide: for they direct us to God as our strength; shew the trust and holy service He requires; and teach us that love to Him, and to the brethren for his sake, cherished in our hearts, and displayed in our lives, is the evidence that we have his Spirit.

The morning lesson to-day shews Israel going on, in the strength of God, overcoming and destroying the Canaanites; but especially that signal victory over the five Kings who would have smitten Gibeon; when the Lord discomfited the enemy with great hailstones, and the Sun and the Moon stood still at the bidding of Joshua. In the evening lesson, Joshua, his work now accomplished, and himself ready to die, calls upon Israel to acknowledge God's truth and goodness in the fulfilment of all his promises; reminding them very solemnly that the condition of his favour is devotedness to his Name, and obedience to all his commands. As long as they should observe this, none would be able to stand before them: neglecting it, He would turn to be their enemy. Lest the mercies they had experienced should lead them to presume upon God's favour, Joshua warns them that

these very mercies, as they were the fulfilment of his promise to bless, were a pledge that He would as truly execute all his threatenings, if they should turn aside from his Law.

The epistle commends the love of God, in that He hath given his Son to be a propitiation for us, and hath imparted to us his Spirit. His love towards us makes it our reasonable duty to love Him; and the proof of our love which He requires is, that we love the brethren for his sake. Gratitude obliges us to this the more strongly, since He loved us freely, and without any claim, or desert on our part. God is love; and if we are his, He dwelleth in us, and giveth us his Spirit, that we may be like unto Him. Love, therefore, is the evidence, the test of our condition. If we love not the brethren, we have not the Spirit of God, and are none of his.

The gospel, in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, supplies an additional motive to the exercise of this divine principle, by shewing that those who are apparently the meanest, and the most wretched, may be the chief objects of God's favour. Lazarus, miserable and despised on earth, is exalted to the most honourable place in heaven; while the luxury of the rich man ends in the torments of hell. Wealth is an important trust. It enables its possessor to become the channel through which God pours his blessings; the minister and instrument, by whom God executes his purposes of goodness. But it is also a snare. Affording the means of present ease and pleasure, it may harden the heart that refuses to be disturbed from its repose by the sorrows of another; and engrossing the individual with present enjoyment, it may keep him without a thought of the future; till in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torment.

XLIV.

My Maker and my King,
What thanks to Thee I owe!
Thy sov'reign goodness is the spring
Whence all my blessings flow.

The creature of thy hand,
By Thee alone I live:
My God! thy benefits demand
More praise than tongue can give.

O ever good and kind!
My best affections move;
With holy thoughts inspire my mind,
And warm my heart to love.

To succour those in need
My grateful breast incline;
Yet, let me never boast the deed,
For all I give is thine.

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

God, who delivers us in our troubles, requires that we relieve the distresses of others.

Morning Lesson . .	Judges iv.
Evening Lesson . .	Judges v.
Epistle	1 John iii. 13—24.
Gospel	St. Luke xiv. 16—24.

The lessons describe the misery which Israel endured, when, for their sins, God sold them into the hand of Jabin, king of Canaan, who "mightily oppressed them twenty years;"—their cry unto the Lord for help;—the great deliverance which He wrought for them by the hand of Deborah and Balak;—and the song of praise and joy with which they celebrated their victory.

The epistle begins with an allusion to the trials which Christians must expect from the enmity of the world; a consideration which implies dependence upon God, who alone can support, comfort, and deliver us. It enjoins in more emphatic language than that for the last Sunday, the duty of love to the brethren; shewing the deadly sin of omitting, and the great blessing of observing it. It requires that practical evidence and exercise of this love which is shewn in relieving their necessities, and denying ourselves for their sake. It offers faith, love, and obedience, as the substance of religion, and declares the glorious privilege of all who thus keep God's commandments; that God dwelleth in them, and they in Him, having the witness and comfort of the Spirit which He giveth them.

The gospel, like the parallel portion, St. Matt. xxii. 1—9, may apply to the invitation and rejection of the Jews, and the calling of the Gentiles; but, that its more literal meaning and application are to be chiefly observed

here, is evident, from the four preceding verses of the chapter, in which Christ commends the poor, the maimed, the halt, and the blind, to our attention and liberality. It offers a caution to those who are busied with the world, lest its cares lead them to neglect the call of God, and so they become excluded at last from the blessings of Heaven; while it shews the poor and destitute, called from the streets and the lanes, the highways and the hedges, and gathered in to feast with the Lord.

XLV.

In deep distress to God I cried,
And He aveng'd my wrongs;
O Lord, my soul in safety hide
From false and sland'rous tongues.

Ah! wo is me: constrain'd to dwell
Among the sons of strife:
When will thy word their tumults quell,
And quiet bless my life!

Fain would I bid contention cease,
And live from tumult far;
But, when I speak to them of peace,
They gird themselves for war.

Psalm cxx.

XLVI.

Great God! o'er heaven and earth supreme,
Whose glories all creation fill;
Our souls adore thine awful Name,
And humbly wait to do thy will.
Thy glorious power what tongue can tell!
What force thy sov'reign word withstand!
Yet Thou dost stoop with men to dwell,
And give thy blessings through their hand.

'Tis ours to feed these lambs of thine,
And train their footsteps on to heaven;
We take with joy the charge divine,
And freely give, as Thou hast given.
O Fount of love! all gracious God!
What can we offer but thine own?
For we are thine, redeem'd with blood,
The precious blood of Christ thy Son.

On these, on us, thy grace bestow;
The contrite heart, the humble mind;
The love of God in Christ to know;
The wisdom from above to find:
Defend us from the power of sin;
Save us from all self-righteous pride;
Our sure support, thy peace within;
Our only plea, that Christ hath died.

For a School Anniversary.

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

God gives his blessing to the lowly.

Morning Lesson, . .	1 Samuel, ii.
Evening Lesson, . .	1 Samuel, iii.
Epistle	1 Peter, v. 5—11.
Gospel	St. Luke xv. 1—10.

St. Peter in the epistle insists upon the great blessings which belong to humility, displayed in lowliness towards one another, and entire submission to God's will. He encourages to acquiescence in present abasement, by the prospect of future exaltation: to perfect trust in God, by the assurance that He careth for us: to soberness, that is, to moderation in desiring and using all the things of this life, lest they lift up our hearts with pride; and to vigilance, against our active and powerful adversary the devil, whom he bids us resist, steadfast in the faith; reminding us that God's people must, indeed, be exercised with trials; but that the God of all grace, who hath called us to his eternal glory, will perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle us, through all that we are called to suffer. Therefore, as we depend upon Him, we pray in the collect for his mighty aid to defend and comfort us in all dangers and adversities.

The morning lesson contains the song of Hannah, when God had rewarded her meek temper, and patient waiting, with the blessing she sought. It is a beautiful and animated commendation of humility, and greatly resembles the song of the blessed Virgin, both in the subject and the spirit. The latter part of the chapter presents a lamentable contrast in the sin of Eli's sons, who dishonoured God's Name and service by their impudent and shameless conduct; and so brought sorrow upon their father, and judgment upon themselves.

The evening lesson, in the call of Samuel, presents another example of the favour with which God regards the lowly. Devoted by the pious vow of his mother, he was brought up from his infancy in the fear of the Lord. The whole of his conduct on this occasion is very pleasing: his immediate and respectful attention to the supposed calls of Eli; his

unwillingness to repeat the painful message; and his candour in telling the whole, when Eli required him to do so. The submission of Eli to the sentence pronounced against his house, (v. 18,) teaches in what temper we ought to receive the chastisement, when God visits for our sins.

The gospel offers, in the conduct and words of Christ, the greatest encouragement to those whose conscious unworthiness would make them afraid to come to God. The kindness of our Lord towards the veriest outcasts of society provoked the taunt from his enemies, "this man receiveth sinners." He justifies himself by expressive parables; and declares, not merely that the penitent sinner shall be received, but that Heaven itself rejoices over him when he repents.

XLV.

O God! the high and Holy One,
Who habiteth Eternity,
Trembling we come before thy throne,
And pour the fervent prayer to Thee.
How glorious is thy dwelling place!
Not human thought can reach so high:
And holy angels veil their face
Before thy dreadful majesty.

Yet, to the lowly contrite breast,
Thou God of love, art ever near;
To give the weary bosom rest,
And wipe away the mourner's tear;
The contrite spirit to revive,
The mourner's comfort to restore,
To keep the fainting soul alive,
And bid the fearful, sin no more.

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

God's Sovereignty.

Morning Lesson . .	1 Samuel xii.
Evening Lesson . .	1 Samuel xiii.
Epistle	Romans viii. 18—23.
Gospel	St. Luke vi. 36—42.

God is our King! He requires that we obey Him in all things; and, as we all are his subjects, that we act with equity and mercy towards one another. And forasmuch as the afflictions of the righteous, the prosperity of the ungodly, and the impunity which often seems to attend upon violence and injustice, might appear inconsistent with his providence, who governs all; and with his equity, whose ways are equal, we are often reminded, as in the epistle, that this life is only a short season of trial; and that a day is coming, when all the sufferings which now exercise the good shall end in exceeding glory. We therefore pray to Him whose mercy abounds, and whose power is over all, that we may so obey Him as our Ruler, and observe Him as our guide, that we may pass safely through this life to our eternal inheritance.

On the subject of God's government, we find Samuel reproving the Israelites, in the morning lesson, for their ingratitude and folly, in demanding that a King should reign over them, when the Lord their God was their King. He proves to them, by a miracle, how greatly they had offended therein; and while he comforts them with words of encouragement, if thenceforth they would serve God faithfully, he warns them of the fatal consequences if they should turn aside. In the evening lesson, he condemns Saul for his disobedience to the express law of God, in presuming to intrude into the priest's office; and declares that, for his sin, the kingdom should be taken away from his family.

In the portion appointed for the gospel, our Lord shews the obligation and blessings of equity; and exposes the hypocrisy of such as condemn the failings of others, while they allow themselves in gross offences. He directs attention to the supreme Lord and Judge; whose mercy and goodness he offers for our example, and whose justice will regard our dealings with others. For an illustration of this part of the subject, we have a noble example of integrity in the morning lesson; where Samuel, having laid down the authority which he had so long exercised, appeals before God to the assembled people, from whom he challenges and receives an unqualified testimony to the moderation of his conduct, and the justice of his government.

XLVIII.

Come, let us search our hearts, and try
If all our ways be right;
Is God's great rule of equity
Our practice, and delight?

Have we to others truly done,
As we would have them do;
Envious, unkind, and false to none;
But always just, and true?

In vain we talk of Jesus' blood,
And place in him our trust,
If, while we boast our love to God,
We prove to men unjust.

Thou! before whom we stand in awe,
And tremble, and obey,
Incline our hearts to keep thy Law,
And love thy perfect way.

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

We are required to obey, and put our trust in God.

Morning Lesson . . .	1 Samuel xv.
Evening Lesson . . .	1 Samuel xvii.
Epistle	1 Peter iii. 8—15.
Gospel	St. Luke v. 1—11.

We are taught in the epistle to walk with quietness, gentleness, brotherly love, and purity; convinced that in the way of peace we shall find peace; or if our righteous conduct should expose us to suffering, still that we should not swerve from our integrity; but trust in God, whose providence is over all, to protect his people, and withstand the wicked. In accordance thereto, the collect prays that the course of this world may be so peaceably ordered by God's governance, that his Church may joyfully serve Him with all godly quietness.

The sin and punishment of disobedience are shewn in the morning lesson by the conduct of Saul, when God had sent him to destroy Amalek. The victory of David over Goliath, described in the evening lesson, is a noble example of confidence in God, under circumstances so unfavourable, that nothing but the most unshaken faith could support the young champion of Israel.

In the gospel, we see the example and reward of St. Peter's obedience, when, at the word of Christ, he let down the net, though his fruitless toils through the night left him no reason to expect any advantage. The miraculous draught of fishes he obtained was a type of his success through the power of the same word, when he should become a fisher of men. The gospel shews also the trust of the apostles, Peter, and James, and John, who, at the call of Jesus, left all, and followed him.

XLIX.

God is our strength! away our fear:
What shall our confidence remove?
Our safeguard, his Almighty care;
Our portion, his unchanging love.

O Lord of Hosts! while Thou art nigh,
Who shall disturb thy people's rest?
What power thine Israel's camp defy,
Or dare to curse whom Thou hast blest?

On Thee our trust is surely stayed,
Though proud and fierce the giant foe;
Through Thee, our all sufficient aid,
The stripling's arm shall lay him low.

So may thy saints on Thee depend;
In all their works thy blessing see;
Gladly thy gracious call attend;
Forsake the world, and follow Thee.

SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

The Blessings of Penitence.

Morning Lesson . .	2 Samuel xii.
Evening Lesson . .	2 Samuel xix.
Epistle	Romans vi. 3—11.
Gospel	St. Matthew v. 20—26.

From considering the duty of obedience and confidence towards God, we proceed to the means whereby we may be restored to his favour when we have offended. This is found in humble and sincere repentance; arising from a due sense of the evil of sin; and from such love to God as shall make us grieve, and condemn ourselves for having broken his Law. The morning lesson gives to the penitent every encouragement to return, in the pardon which the heinous guilt of David obtained upon his contrition; the sincerity and depth of which, we know from the penitential Psalms. The corrections which the prophet declared against him, even while he pronounced God's pardon, and the sorrows which accordingly embittered all the rest of his life, warn us against the presumption which would draw encouragement to sin from God's

The evening lesson shews the Israelites who had rebelled, returning to their allegiance and duty. David's forgiveness of Shimei, who had so grossly injured him, may illustrate God's goodness in pardoning us, who have affronted Him with far deeper injuries. The eventual fate of this rebel, 1 Kings ii. 46, teaches how cautious they should be who have received remission of great sins, lest offending again, they find judgment instead of mercy.

In the gospel we learn the spiritual nature of the service which God requires; to whom outward homage without the heart, the righteousness of the scribes and pharisees, is an abomination. It teaches also, that if we exercise not forbearance and charity towards others, God will not accept our prayers and offerings; and it shews the importance of making haste to obtain forgiveness and reconciliation when we have offended. The epistle explains the obligations of our baptism, which, as it figures a very death unto sin, and consequent freedom from its bondage, with a resurrection to newness of life, binds us to renounce all sin, and to walk consistently in holiness. And in the collect we pray for the principle of this new and spiritual life; that fervent love to God, which makes us to delight in his service, and to hate whatever may offend Him.

L.

Thou friend of sinners! who hast bought
Our freedom with thy precious blood;
Whose grace my wand'ring feet hath sought,
To bring me to the fold of God;
Forgive my sins; my fears remove;
And fill my grateful heart with love.

Thee let my ardent soul pursue;
To Thee with fervent love aspire;
Oh may thy Spirit still renew
Within my heart that heavenly fire;
And ever prompt my jealous care
To guard the sacred treasure there.

In suffering, be thy love my peace;
In weakness, be thy love my power
And when this mortal life shall cease,
Bless with thy love my latest hour:
My strength in life, that Thou dost guide;
My hope in death, that Thou hast died.

SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Death and Life.

Morning Lesson .	2 Samuel xxi.
Evening Lesson .	2 Samuel xxiv.
Epistle	Romans vi. 19—23.
Gospel	St. Mark viii. 1—9.

The repentance enjoined on the last Sunday is enforced to day, by the fatal consequences of remaining in sin, and the blessed fruit and reward of holiness.

"The wages of sin is death." The slave of sin will assuredly receive this, his due payment, from his cruel and tyrannical master, unless he be timely delivered from his bondage. It may be long delayed, as the judgment recorded in the morning lesson, which cut off the house of Saul for his wickedness and cruelty, in slaying the priests of the Lord, and slaughtering all the inhabitants of Nob, their city, 1 Sam. xxii. 19, was not executed until forty years after: or it may be inflicted promptly, as in the evening lesson, where God, being angry with Israel for their sins, suffered David, in the pride of his heart, to number the people; and so to bring upon them the plague, the punishment declared, Exodus xxx. 12—16, if the people should be numbered without making the offering required from each for the ransom of his soul. Soon, or late, death will surely be the wages of the sinner.

"The gift of God is eternal life." We have no deserts to plead here. As sinners, we may earn our wages; but our salvation is the free gift of God, by whose mercy we are called, and by whose help we are kept in the way of righteousness. The compassion of God in sparing us is shewn in the latter portion of the evening lesson, where of his mercy He remits the punishment. His gift of eternal life is figured in the gospel, by the food miraculously provided for the multitude; a representation of that spiritual food, the body and blood of Christ, St. John vi., of which, if a man eat, he shall live for ever.

LI.

Jesus! hear the sinner's cry!
Leave, O leave us not to die:
Sunk in bondage, guilt, and shame,
All our hope is in thy name:
By the Cross for man endured;
By the hope to man restored;
Listen to the sinner's plea;
Set the lawful captive free.

Lord of life! thy blessing give;
Bid the dying sinner live.
By the ransom thou hast paid;
By the grave where thou wast laid;
By thy rising from the dead;
By thy foes in triumph led;
Let us thy salvation see;
Life eternal, Lord, with thee.

EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

The Witness of the Spirit.

Morning Lesson . .	1 Kings xiii.
Evening Lesson . .	1 Kings xvii.
Epistle	Romans viii. 12—17.
Gospel	St. Matt. vii. 15—21.

But how may we know that we have escaped from death, and obtained a title to eternal life? This is the evidence: we receive the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba, Father; the Spirit itself bearing witness to our spirits that we are sons of God: the blessed privileges of which relationship are described in the epistle.

But there is a false profession, against which it is necessary to guard. It is written, "Prove all things."—"Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are from God."—"Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves."—"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven." We know that many deceive themselves greatly, by mistaking their own vain assurance, and exalted imagination, for the witness of the Spirit; and that many deceivers cloak themselves with the pretence of superior piety. What is the sure test whereby we may know the truth, unmask the impostor, expose the self-deceiver, and confirm the faithful, but fearing christian?

The evidence which determines the sonship of God's children is clear, for it is strictly practical. The epistle describes their character who are led by the Spirit of God—through the Spirit they mortify the deeds of the body, and the Gospel:—they do the will of their Father who is in heaven. The avoidance of sin, and the practice of holiness, mark them for the sons of God. "By their fruits ye shall know them." A profession in accordance with the word of God, and a practice according to the will of God, are the evidence that we are led by the Spirit.

The old prophet from Bethel invited the prophet of Judah to stay and eat bread, pretending that an angel had so commanded. But in opposition to this assertion of a man, and a stranger, the prophet of Judah had the sure word and commandment of God, which ought to have been a sufficient proof that the other "lied unto him." But, like the many who receive the commandments and teaching of men for doctrine, instead of the testimony of God in the Bible, he disobeyed the sure word, and listened to the deceiver; and his life was the penalty.

On the other hand, the prophet of Judah, and Elijah, in the morning and evening lessons, proved that their message to the idolatrous kings of Israel was truly from God, because it agreed with his Law, and was confirmed with works of power. Deuteronomy xviii. 21, 22.

This then is the witness of the Spirit: not fancied supernatural impulses; but to hold the truth, and to walk in accordance therewith. Feelings may deceive, and impulses mislead us; but where the fruits of the Spirit appear, "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance," we have an evidence not to be mistaken. They who are the sons of God, are renewed after his image. "We know," says the Apostle, "that we have passed from death unto life,"—why! because we have the assurance in our heart, and feel our spirits elevated to rapture? No! but,—"because we love the brethren."

LII.

Abba, Father, while we sing,
Hear the thankful praise we bring;
Taught to cast our care on Thee,
Daily mercies, Lord, we see:
Yet enrich us with thy grace;
Give us with thy sons a place.

By the Holy Spirit led;
Nourish'd with celestial bread;
Strengthen'd through their mortal strife;
Kept to everlasting life;
Peace, and hope, to them are given;
Time, and glory; earth, and heaven.

What though trials wait us here;
Christ endured what we must bear;
If his grace our strength sustain,
Welcome sorrow, shame, and pain:
Peace shall flow from ev'ry loss;
Endless glory from the Cross.

NINTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

The Help of the Spirit.

Morning Lesson . .	1 Kings xviii.
Evening Lesson . .	1 Kings xix.
Epistle	1 Cor. x. 1—13
Gospel	St. Luke xvi. 1—9.

In the collect, we confess that we cannot do anything that is good without God's help, and pray therefore for his Spirit, that we may think and do always such things as be rightful. This truth, the all-sufficiency of God's help, and our own utter weakness, is shewn very strikingly in the lessons.

When we see Elijah going fearlessly to meet Ahab, though that wicked king had long sought his life; standing, as the only remaining prophet of the Lord, before the assembled priests of Baal, and the idolatrous multitudes of Israel; asserting the truth which they had forsaken, and manifesting God's power, to the confusion of the one, and the conviction of the other; we scarcely recognize him as belonging to our own nature. He stands as one raised above the infirmities of humanity, and invested with the power of a superior being.

In a few short hours, this great prophet is fleeing for his life to the wilderness, trembling at the threats of Jezebel, and beseeching God in his despondency to release him from the miseries of life. We now find that, as St. James remarks, "Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are;" helpless like us, when left to himself; and strong only in the power of God. We find that the most perfect and triumphant saint, in the moment, and at the height of his exaltation, depends as entirely upon God's continual help, as the feeblest penitent; a consideration, to chasten our confidence with holy fear, and to encourage our despondency with joyful hope.

The epistle teaches the same truth. The conduct and punishment of the Israelites, who, though delivered from bondage, brought into covenant with God, and led by his hand, yet sinned, and perished in the wilderness, are given for our example and admonition; warning him who thinketh that he standeth to take heed lest he fall; and encouraging the feeble with the assurance that God will not suffer them to be tempted above that they are able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape.

This is a promise, not of deliverance without exertions, but of help to make our exertions effectual. How we should exert ourselves, we learn in the gospel. The unjust steward, finding that he was to be put out of his stewardship, improved the present time to prepare against future calamities; and took without delay that course which promised to secure the end he had in view. He is commended, not for his injustice; he is condemned and punished for that, but for his prudence, foresight, and activity. In these points his conduct is offered as a reproof to the negligence of Christians. "The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light." Who, alas, but must confess himself an unfaithful steward, who hath wasted his Lord's goods; and death will soon put us out of our stewardship. Let us therefore make to ourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; being so faithful in the improvement of all the talents entrusted to us, and in the use of all the temporal goods committed to our charge, that when they fail, we may be received into everlasting habitations.

LIII.

O help us Lord! in all our need
Thy heavenly succour give:
Help us in thought, in word, in deed,
Through ev'ry hour we live.

Thy strength and comfort, Lord, impart,
When gloomy doubt prevails;
When fear and sorrow wound the heart,
And trembling nature fails.

Help us with humble faith to pray;
With holy joy to praise;
And walking in thy perfect way,
To serve Thee all our days.

In all temptations, Lord, be nigh,
To whom for help we flee:
And oh, support us when we die;
Then, take our souls to Thee!

TENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

The Gifts of the Spirit improved in declaring the Truth to Sinners.

Morning Lesson . .	1 Kings xxi.
Evening Lesson . .	1 Kings xxii.
Epistle	1 Cor. xii. 1—11.
Gospel	St. Luke xix. 41—47.

On the first Sunday after Easter, and on Ascension day, we learned how the Lord commissioned his apostles to preach the truth in his name, and with his authority: and at Whitsuntide, how they were invested by the Holy Ghost with all the spiritual gifts they required to fulfil their mission. The services of to-day shew the application of the subject.

The epistle, which was read in the second morning lesson for Monday in Whitsun week, enumerates the various gifts imparted by the Spirit for the edification of the Church; which all are given that they may be properly improved. The disposition in which they are to be used is shewn in the gospel, and lessons; which offer to ministers an example of pity, hope, courage, and faithfulness, in the exercise of their office.

From our Lord's weeping over Jerusalem, his ministers should learn to cherish pity for the worst sinners. Her day of grace was gone. She had refused instruction, and killed the prophets whom God had sent unto her. The Saviour knew that within that very week she would fill the measure of her guilt by dragging him to a shameful death; yet the only feeling of his heart is the deepest commiseration for her now inevitable fate.

They learn also from his example to labor with unwearied zeal under the most discouraging circumstances. He purified the Temple, by casting out them who profaned it, and taught daily therein.

Elijah's address to Ahab, after his impious murder of Naboth, is a fine example of boldness in reproving a powerful and flagrant offender. The penitence of Ahab, though unhappily it was not lasting; and the mitigation of his sentence which he thereby obtained, give encouraging assurance that the case of the worst, and, apparently, the most hardened sinner, is not to be deemed hopeless.

In Micaiah we see a faithful preacher, who, neither moved by the solicitations of the messenger that he should prophesy smooth things, nor affrighted at the King's anger, declares the whole truth of God, and foretells the fatal end of the course which the King was pursuing. The whole picture is too often verified by experience. The sinner resented the faithfulness that warned him of his fate, and cherished the flatterers who encouraged him to his destruction.

LIV.

And have we heard the joyful sound!
Have we the only Saviour found!
And shall we not to all proclaim
Life and salvation through his Name!

Hath God to us his glory shewn,—
Oh, not for merits of our own!
And shall not love constrain our heart
His truth to sinners to impart!

O Saviour, who for all hast died!
Be thou our teacher, help, and guide:
Inflame our hearts with christian love;
And bless our labours from above.

Send forth thy light; display thy power;
Let all confess; let all adore;
In ev'ry land thy word be sown;
By ev'ry soul thy truth be known!

ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Pride and Humility.

Morning Lesson . . .	2 Kings v.
Evening Lesson . . .	2 Kings ix.
Epistle	1 Cor. xv. 1—11.
Gospel	St. Luke xviii. 9—14.

The morning lesson describes the cure of Naaman's leprosy; the evening lesson, the rebellion of Jehu, and the miserable end of Jezebel: the parable of the pharisee and the publican forms the gospel; and the epistle, with a summary of christian faith, contains St. Paul's lowly estimate of himself.

The summary of the Gospel which St. Paul preached to the Corinthians, as he declares in

the epistle, is, " that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day." To the right receiving of this faith, pride is the chief obstacle; humility the most favourable temper; as it is written, " God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble." To-day we have examples of both these characters under their various forms.

The pride of human reason is seen in Naaman, when he scorned the simple means of cure directed by the prophet. He expected a striking manifestation of God's power in the means, as well as in the result; and revolted at a sacramental mode, where the means was nothing in itself, but derived all its efficacy from the grace imparted by Him who appointed it.

The pride of guilt and infidelity is awfully manifested in Jezebel; whose name is a word of abomination to all ages. Proof upon proof of God's power, truth, mercy, and justice, was afforded to her in the miracles and conduct of Elijah; and warning upon warning, in the judgments which her own guilt brought upon her family, and upon Israel: yet the only effect was to harden her in wickedness, and to fill her with murderous rage against the prophets of the Lord. Her punishment is related in the evening lesson; from which we find that she preserved her character of proud defiance to the last.

The pride of self-righteousness is shewn in the pharisee; who, swollen with fancied goodness, insulted heaven with his boasting, and never suspected that he had need of penitence and pardon.

It is more pleasing, though not more instructive, to observe the opposite picture.

We learn that the meanest and weakest have their duties, and means of usefulness, which they ought to improve. The little captive maid, whose age, sex, and condition seemed to condemn her to insignificance, was made the instrument to relieve the general of the Syrian armies from his miserable condition, and to bring him to the knowledge of the true God.

We see the humility of saving faith in Naaman, when, having come to a better mind, he goes down to Jordan to wash and be clean; surrendering his former imaginations, and meekly submitting to the appointed means which in his arrogance he had despised.

The humility, and blessing of penitence are shewn in the publican. Him, who dared not approach, nor lift up his eyes to heaven, but smote upon his breast, crying, " God be merciful to me a sinner," God regarded with favor, and he went down to his house justified.

Finally, the humility of holiness is seen in St. Paul; being shewn in a deep sense of his former sin; a lowly acknowledgment of the grace that saved him; a thankful remembrance of the manner in which he had improved this grace; but with an earnest disclaimer of any merit therefrom; ascribing all that he was, and all that he had been enabled to do, only to God.

A good man *must* be humble. He cannot repent, without shame and sorrow for his sins. He cannot believe aright, without a full conviction of his utter helplessness. He cannot know his own heart, without seeing everything that should keep him low. He cannot aspire after holiness, without lamenting continually how far he falls short of it.

LV.

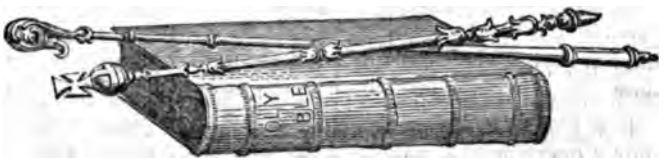
Lord, that I may learn of Thee,
Give me true simplicity;
Seeking more of Thee to know;
Wean'd, and kept from things below.

Let me freely cast aside
All that feeds my boasting pride
Always willingly submit,
Meekly learning at thy feet.

Father, I would rest on thee,
Lowly as a child should be;
Seeing only in thy light;
Walking only in thy might.

Let my treasure be thy love;
Let the Cross my glory prove;
In thy presence while I stay,
None can take my hope away.

CHURCH AND KING.



"FEAR GOD—HONOUR THE KING."

No. X. JULY 1, 1837.

THE CHURCH AND DISSENT,

CONSIDERED IN THEIR PRACTICAL INFLUENCE.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Duty of Churchmen at the present Crisis.

We have neither sought, nor provoked, the existing conflict. Our opponents have forced it upon us; and our conduct throughout has been defensive. Their object has been to overthrow, what all the obligations of duty bind us to maintain. For this we have made a stand; but, as hitherto we have not interfered with them, or their privileges, so, in what remains to be done, we shall not be tempted to forget Christian charity, and Christian temper. Nothing is required for our triumph but that we should quietly do our duty; nothing for the destruction of our enemies, but that we should stand apart, and leave them to destroy themselves.

They who have been accustomed to think unfavourably of Dissent, would yet scarcely be prepared to find the tendency of the system always hurtful; but, when they consider the principle, they will easily understand why this must inevitably be the case. For, if God have ordained a Church,—which is not to be doubted,—that Church must have some essential character, some fixed principles, of absolute, universal, and perpetual force, which are never to be made subordinate to any arrangements of expediency. There are three necessary parts in the Christian Church:—the faith of Christ, which is the only foundation;—the whole assembly of the faithful, who are the building;—and the government, which preserves the unity, peace, and order of the whole. All these must have a fixed character, because they are essentials; and a difference in essentials would destroy the unity, and catholicity of the Church. If, therefore, Christ hath sent his ministers into the world, as the Father sent him; investing them with his own authority, to teach, and to govern, in his name, then the voluntary principle is rebellion against the ministerial authority of Christ; for it requires those ministers to obey, whom their Lord commissioned to rule; and claims the power of government for the people, whose duty is obedience.

It is not necessary here, to shew, by quotation, and argument, how entirely this is opposed to Scripture, and to reason. This has been proved in the mischief to which it leads. But if wrong at all, it is the very opposite of the right. And, since error, followed out to its application and consequences, must inevitably lead farther and farther from the truth; and truth and error in morals, are identical with good and evil; therefore Dissent, having taken an essential error for its leading and active principle, must always, and inevitably, tend to evil, wherever, and as far as, that error operates.

Nor is this position at all invalidated by the many very estimable persons we find

among dissenters. Their character has been formed by circumstances and causes distinct from Dissent, and they have, in great measure, escaped its influence. They worship in the Meeting-house, because they have been led to suppose that the choice between different sects is only a question of expediency; and they think a dissenting service more spiritual, because habit has associated their religious feelings with it. But they neither allow themselves to be trammelled by the exclusiveness of Dissent, nor will they stoop to its party objects. Such things, indeed, their correct feelings lead them to condemn and despise. Their character is formed by the various influences which operate on society, and it has been shewn how these depend upon the Church.

Churchmen and dissenters espectively have formed very mistaken views, because each has judged of the other party from data belonging to his own. The churchman, accustomed to nothing but what is orderly and decent, gave credit to Dissent for the same: the dissenter formed no idea of any thing in the Church better than what he saw around him; and whatever seemed greater, he attributed to pride, and corruption. The events of the last six years have made both parties much better known. Churchmen at least will hardly be deceived again.

The present position of Dissent is one of extreme danger to itself; even to the extent of threatening its very existence. For many years past, it has not been able to advance, though every thing has been in its favour: how then shall it now stand, when everything is becoming adverse? The democratic principles, so favourable to its success, since they accord with its own system, which prevailed for the last twenty years, are daily losing ground. The peculiar, and extreme tenets of Calvinism, upon which the whole congregational system is founded, are so entirely sunk in England, that the high-church, and calvinistic parties, scarcely differ except in words. That large section of the clergy, who formerly gave such countenance to Dissent, that it was even anticipated they might themselves form a sect of episcopal dissenters, have been compelled, by the circumstances of the times, to take a decided part with their brethren. The rising generation of the clergy are to a man opposed to compromise. The laity in communion with the Church, who not long ago regarded Dissent with deference, and respect, have at length learnt to know it; and it is one of the benefits of the Municipal Reform Bill, that it has greatly contributed to this happy result. So completely, and openly, has it identified Dissent with movement politics, that the radical journals distinguished the candidates indifferently, as "churchman, and dissenter;" or "conservative, and radical." None speak well of it now, except its own party; its character with the public is gone. Add to this, that the influence of the Church is greatly, and steadily increasing. In the five years between 1829, and 1834, the number of children receiving education in schools connected with the National Society was more than doubled. In moderately large towns, and populous districts, hitherto the strongholds of Dissent, Methodism is fast occupying the ground which the Church cannot fill. Formidable as it has hitherto proved, its power as a check upon Dissent has hardly yet appeared. At the beginning of the present century, its extent was comparatively small, and a degree of scandal still attached to its profession. Yet it increased rapidly, till the prevalence of democratic feelings checked, and disturbed it. Now, having firmly avowed its own principles, and thrown off its unsound members, it has sprung forward with the strength of a giant; and small will be the hope of Dissent wherever they meet as rivals.

As Dissent becomes unpopular, its supplies from without will be cut off; a condition which alone must be inevitably fatal; since without such supplies, its losses by change of residence, death, and desertion, will soon exhaust it. In addition to this, all its conduct for the last six years has strengthened and confirmed that party feeling, which is the bane of its character, and the ruin of its peace. To attack the Church, it has called up the worst spirit of enmity, strife, and faction; and whoever makes a compact with an evil spirit, must pay the penalty. When the time is fulfilled, he tears his master in pieces.

Our present duty is comprehended in

quietly, firmly, and consistently, giving effect to Church principles. This includes three particulars :—to carry out these principles to their full extent in everything that relates to our own conduct ;—to maintain them against aggression ;—and to exert ourselves to make them properly appreciated ; and especially, to extend their influence and blessings to the poor.

No principle ought to be more prominently maintained than the authority of the Christian ministry, as derived from the commission of our Lord, and continued by apostolical succession ; for with this is identified the spiritual authority of the Church. This principle is established, by the analogy of the Old Testament, which forbids to suppose that what was then a capital crime can now be a holy duty ; by the words of our Lord ; by the manner in which the apostles exercised, and conferred authority ; by the universal consent of the Fathers ; by all the history of the Christian Church ; and by the circumstances under which a voluntary ministry originated. But every truth has its own practical value ; nor is that under consideration an exception. It is calculated to impress far more exalted views of the importance of public worship ; upon the minister, because the consciousness of holding such a commission so immeasurably exalts his responsibility ; upon the people, because it teaches them to look beyond the minister, to God, whose message he delivers. Let it not be forgotten, that the benefit to be derived from any Christian privilege, is in proportion to the faith which appropriates it. All admit this with reference to the Holy Communion ; and it equally applies to all the services of God's House. The more we receive the word as God's message, duly considering the office and authority he bears who speaks it, the more will be our comfort, and profit. Thus also we shall best avoid indifference, captiousness, and all the bad feelings which rob us of the blessing. The apostolical commission of the Christian ministry is therefore a truth, which, in respect to the practical advantages it offers, ought to be prominently asserted, and firmly maintained.

In all schools, of whatever description, the children should be thoroughly grounded in Church principles ; being taught to understand well the duties they owe to the Church, the blessings they receive through her ministrations, and the sinfulness, and folly of schism. The more popular the evil, the more necessary to put them fully on their guard against it. Unmoved by the complaints of mistaken charity, the wavering of friends, and the clamour of foes, we should do this duty in the strength of conscious integrity. True charity towards those who "have erred, and are deceived," is to withstand, and correct their error ; and the only peace we ought to value, is that derived from the full establishment of truth.

This by no means implies a hostile, or a party spirit. We judge no man ; but acting upon what we believe, we entirely withhold our sanction from what we condemn ; and this we are bound to do. For we have no right to lead our fellow-worshippers by our example to undervalue those institutions, through which they derive spiritual strength, and comfort : we have no right to confirm our opponents in their error, by giving to it our sanction : we have no right to form unions without the Church, which create divisions within, by estranging us from the friends who condemn our inconsistency, and looseness. That is not Christian charity, which divides friends, that it may lend its influence to enemies.

What can we hope to gain by compromise with Dissent ? Certainly not a better feeling in dissenters. The last concession of the most liberal or thoughtless churchman would still leave to the Church distinctions which they would desire to pull down. A few years since, there was a very extensive alliance with them, which greatly increased their credit, and power ; but did this in any degree reconcile them to the Church ? No—nor was it to be expected. A cordial union cannot exist between parties holding opposite principles.

Especially at the present moment, when all religious and political institutions are tried and shaken, each should stand only upon its own foundation. Leave Dissent therefore entirely to itself, to stand, or fall as it may. If, as it affirms, its principles are established in truth, and wisdom, it will be surely strengthened, when freed from all intercourse with a corrupt Church. Let it therefore prove by its fruits, the excellency of its principles. Let it stand alone, before the eyes of all men, in its purity,

and strength; and compel their homage, for the brightness of a character unspotted by the corruptions of a State alliance, and the energy of a system unshackled by its chains! Alas! that no mockery should be so bitter as to repeat its own pretensions.

As far as the alleged grievances of dissenters affect themselves, let them have the most liberal, and full relief, which the legislature can afford; and that, without inquiring too curiously into their motives for seeking it. But let the measures be strictly confined to relieving them from what they complain of; and in no case, extend to interference with others. They must not be allowed to demand their relief in a form which would disturb the Church, and create confusion in the Country.

The claim of admission into our Universities seems to be dropped. Their friends have felt it too bold an attempt to coerce Oxford, and Cambridge; and after the lesson they have lately received, they will hardly venture again on the experiment of corrupting them. The constitution of our Universities must have been quite changed, before dissenters could be admitted. Especially, it would be no longer possible to enforce attendance at chapel, which is the foundation of College discipline; for independent of its value as a religious duty, it is a security for the orderly arrangement of the day, an important restraint upon the dissipated, and a valuable relief to the industrious. It is the family worship of the College. Dissent cannot claim on the grounds of justice, that the Church Universities shall be thrown open; for it is the learning of the Church which has given them their high character: nor can it plead real injury in being excluded; for the four northern Universities have equal power to confer degrees; and are much less expensive. These are open to all sects; yet not many dissenters avail themselves of the advantage, because Dissent has neither demand, nor encouragement, for learning. It is therefore evident, that the claim to enter Oxford, and Cambridge, was put forth, less to gain direct advantage for itself, than to deprive the Universities of their distinct Church character, thus weakening those habits, and feelings, which confirm the educated classes in the communion of the Church.

The assertion so often made that the Church possesses the Universities by usurpation, because many of the Colleges existed before the reign of Henry VIII., is altogether a fallacy. The English Church at the Reformation finally established that independence of Rome, which she had always contended for: and as an independent Church, she had full power, as it was her duty, to return to the Bible as her only standard of faith; and to reject all the corruptions, and innovations, which the Bible condemned. The Reformation did not make a new Church in England, but purified the old one: just as Paul the apostle, was the same person with Saul the persecutor, but changed in principles, and in character.

Dissenters are quite welcome to marry, to register their children, and to bury, in their own way; with all the sanction, and encouragement, which the State can give them; but certainly not to require, and compel the Church to conform to their practices. It is a novel proceeding, and a beautiful specimen of consistency, for those who condemn all State interference in matters of religion, and contend for the inviolable rights of conscience, to ally themselves closely with the State, and avail themselves of its power, to coerce the consciences of their neighbours.

The marriage bill passed by the House of Commons is grossly offensive. We claim, for our poorer brethren, as for ourselves, that for us, marriage shall continue, in all its parts, a religious, and a Church ceremony. It is associated with feelings of the most refined delicacy, and with duties of the most sacred obligation. The present system connects it all with the clergyman, our friend, and spiritual father, whom we love, and reverence. We protest against the indignity of being required to answer questions put by a civil functionary, a registrar, an overseer of the poor; and to pass through his office to the altar.

Yet we are justified by the declarations of the political dissenters, in Parliament and elsewhere, in affirming, that they will reject any measure of relief for themselves, unless the Church be compelled to adopt the same. It may be added, that the respectable dissenters are so far from desiring these changes, that they would deprecate them, almost as much as churchmen themselves.

Dissenters may register their children, if they please, in every one of their Meetings; and have all the facilities which a public and central office can afford, to make their registration available, and secure. This, it is true, would utterly destroy the delusion they have so industriously, and successfully propagated of their strength, and numbers; and fully expose their weakness, and decline: but that is their own affair.

As to the National Registration scheme, the promoters might be left to settle it with the Country. Its arrangements are so absurd, and impracticable; and its system so offensive, despotic, and oppressive, that if the Conservatives wished to make the party now in office thoroughly hated, and despised, by all men, an effectual means would be, to allow this bill to pass. The motive for it is obvious enough, from the refusal to admit a delay of six weeks in registering births, that the registrar might receive notice from the clergyman who baptizes the child; a delay which could occasion no mistake, or inconvenience; for if the child should die in the interval, its birth, and death, would be registered together. The object, as the Rev. Mr. Hale has very ably explained, is to destroy the connexion between baptism, and the name of the child; that so they may cut off a powerful inducement to early baptism, and sever one of the closest bands which attach the feelings of the people to the Church:—a conduct, to be paralleled only by that of the revolutionary atheists of France, when they changed the computation of time, that they might destroy the observance of the Sabbath.

It is truly astonishing, that any number of men, like those who passed this bill in the House of Commons, should be so ignorant of the condition of the poor. But we have always seen, that these friends and champions of the people, with liberty in their mouths, and oppression in their hearts, have as little scruple to excite the poor to violence and crime, on the one hand, as to grind, and trample them to dust, on the other, whenever their own party objects are to be served. The poor man in the country, living at some distance from the registrar, and probably employed in an opposite direction, for he does not always get employment at his own door, cannot give the two notices required, without losing a day's work for each: and that at a time, when the circumstances of his family have created additional expense, and deprived him of the assistance of his wife. Baptisms in the country are almost always performed on the Sunday, because it is the only day on which the labouring poor can spare time to come to Church. If the husband be sick, or dead, or absent, there will be no one to give the notice at all. A strong prejudice will be universally created among the poor, which no explanation will be able to remove, by connecting the registration with the officers appointed to administer the new poor law. As to levying penalties for neglect, how are they to be enforced against those who have nothing to pay? Where could a magistrate be found, except perhaps in a whig-radical corporation, who would send a labourer to prison for non-payment, or take the bed from under his wife and her new-born baby?

Dissent and liberalism are little likely to be made popular, by subjecting every man in the Country to personal inconvenience, to interference with his domestic concerns, loss of time, penalties, fine, distress, and imprisonment, that their hostility against the Church may be promoted; and it augurs well for the Church herself, that her enemies cannot reach her, without trampling over the liberties and feelings of the people. In the days of Tory tyranny, the people managed their own local affairs, and every honest man did as he pleased, knowing nothing of the Government but its protection. But now, in the days of liberty, we are to be relieved from the trouble of free-agency; and Government will manage every thing for us, from regulating a poor-house or a turnpike trust, down to fixing the day for giving a name to a baby. The sturdy old British oak is to be bent down, and trained to an espalier; and lopped and trimmed after the newest French fashion.

The demand of dissenters to bury in our church-yards, while they claimed to be excused from church-rates, was too palpably inconsistent to be pressed. It appears, however, from a discussion in the House of Commons, July 13, that the principle is not forgotten. Churchmen desire to be buried in consecrated ground; and if this be a folly, we may surely be indulged in our weakness. But in such situations none but clergymen

can officiate; for the same principle which excludes a layman from the church pulpit, prevents him from officiating in any place set apart for the services of the Church. It was therefore necessary to a general cemetery, that one part should be consecrated for the service of the Church, and another left open for ministers, and parties, of all denominations. But modern liberalism is indignant at an arrangement which leaves every man free to follow his own views. Either dissenters must be allowed to officiate in consecrated ground, from which they may step into the Church itself, or burying grounds must not be consecrated. At all events there must be no distinction; and uniformity is to be obtained, by requiring churchmen to surrender all opinions, feelings, and principles, except such as Dissent will tolerate.

The pretence urged against church-rates, the injustice of compelling dissenters to support an Establishment from which they receive no benefit, is utterly unfounded. With equal truth it might be applied to government taxes. Every man has a direct personal interest in the general character and prosperity of the nation; and it is clear, that great part of the Country would be left in a state of pagan barbarism, but for the ministrations of an endowed Church; a state, which every man, whether churchman or dissenter, is equally interested to prevent.

But the argument does not rest here. Dissent is a fluctuating creed, and seldom continues in a family beyond the third generation. Without, therefore, alluding to the powerful influence which an orthodox and pervading religious establishment exerts upon every man, the Church is the source from whence the individual dissenter received, either directly in his youth, or through his immediate forefathers, that religious knowledge, which, when he became a separatist, made him a dissenter, instead of an infidel: and, however unwelcome the truth to his present feelings, he may conclude from all the experience of society, that his own descendants will worship in the Church, and that, perhaps, even in his life-time. Add to this, that the Church offers to himself security, that if the changes, to which every Meeting is liable, should destroy that which he attends, or compel him to leave it; or if he should remove into the country, or to a distant part of the kingdom, he will be sure to find a place, where God is worshipped according to the truth of the Bible. In as far therefore as every man is interested in the source whence he derived the good he enjoys, in the welfare of his children, and in the contingent probabilities of his own life, every dissenter is interested in supporting the Church of England.

The substitution of a Parliamentary grant for church-rates, would not affect the principle, as dissenters themselves declare; for they would equally pay their proportion through general taxes, as through local rates; and the change would be open to very serious objections. A minister unfriendly to the Church could then threaten the curtailment, or withdrawal of the grant, as we have seen a scientific institution punished for black-balling a popish archbishop. A factious minority in the House of Commons would make the annual grant a subject for annual attack; a popish, and anti-social majority would refuse it. The House of Commons, speaking of it collectively, has a character to redeem, before any great national interest, especially one connected with religion and order, can be safely trusted to its vote. But admitting these fears to be groundless, it would be impossible for a commission, charged to distribute a public grant among eleven thousand churches, so to understand, and weigh their respective claims, as to make a satisfactory division. Still less could it discriminate for each church, between the annual charge to provide for the decencies of public worship, and the extraordinary expenses required occasionally for repairs. Nor is it likely that parishes would create a reserved fund for such contingencies, when the sum allowed annually would scarcely meet their ordinary wants.

The support of ecclesiastical buildings by voluntary contributions is not to be thought of. In towns, perhaps, sufficient sums might be obtained by letting the pews; but for country parishes, where the seats must be free, the voluntary system, supposing it could be made effectual, would only take the burden from property, to throw it upon the earnings of the poor. If the clergyman should meet any deficiency, which he would generally be

required to do, the poor would still be the sufferers, for he would thus be deprived of his fund for personal charities.

A rate, therefore, equally assessed upon all property, levied by the direct authority of the parishioners, and collected and expended by officers properly chosen, and accountable, is in all respects the most unobjectionable course. By this means alone can the varying expenses of different years be properly met, while due control is given to the parties, who are interested in preventing waste and extravagance. It is a sound principle, and the foundation of our constitution, that all local concerns shall be managed, as far as possible, by the people themselves; with the support of the law, when necessary, to strengthen the hands of the good, and to control the disorderly; and a hearty affection for the institutions of the Country, with a cheerful obedience to the law, is a voluntary principle as far superior to the sacred rights of rebellion, as the good old English constitution excels the quackery, and jobbing, of Whig centralization.

THE CHURCH ESTABLISHED ON THE BIBLE.

TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

The Law and the Gospel.

Morning Lesson . .	2 Kings x.
Evening Lesson . .	2 Kings xviii.
Epistle	2 Cor. iii. 4—9.
Gospel	St. Mark vii. 31—37.

The superiority of the Gospel, as a dispensation of life, to the Law, which was a ministration of condemnation, is declared in the epistle; in which St. Paul affirms that God hath committed this more excellent dispensation to his ministers, whom He hath invested with power and sufficiency to minister therein. He magnifies the glory of the Law, that he may exalt the more exceeding glory of the Gospel. This glory of the Law was represented by the brightness which shone on the face of Moses when he came down from the mount, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold his countenance. Its terrible sanctions as a ministration of death, are manifested in the penalties which attended its violation.

The lessons present awful examples of the punishment that awaits transgressors of the Law; in the unpitying extermination of Baal's worshippers by Jehu; and in the carrying away of Israel into captivity; "because they obeyed not the voice of the Lord their God, but transgressed his Covenant, and all that Moses the servant of the Lord commanded, and would not hear them, nor do them."—Evening Lesson, v. 12.

The evening lesson figures the dangers to which we are exposed, and the salvation wrought for us, in the siege of Jerusalem by Sennacherib. The history of the same event, as related by Isaiah, is read on the first Sunday after Christmas, to represent our salvation by Jesus Christ.

The blessings we obtain by the Gospel are signified by the cure of the deaf and dumb: as it is written, "The ears of them that hear shall hearken, and the tongue of the stammerer shall be ready to speak plainly;" Isa. xxxii. 3, 4. "Then the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing;" Isa. xxxv. 5, 6. Such are the blessings brought to us by the Gospel; to save us from all our enemies, to open our ears that we may gladly receive instruction, and to loose our tongues to sing praises to our God.

LVI.

Oh, the Almighty Lord!
How dreadful is his power!
Tremble, thou earth, beneath his word,
And all ye heavens, adore!

Yet Lord, thy saints appear
Before thine awful face;
And worshipping with holy fear,
Adore thy saving grace.

Thy presence guards their path,
Whom Thou dost love to bless;
But they shall know thy fearful wrath,
Who dare thy Church oppress.

All glory to the King,
Who sits enthroned above!
The terrors of his might we sing,
And bless his deeds of love.

THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

God's Covenant with his People.

Morning Lesson . .	2 Kings xix.
Evening Lesson . .	2 Kings xxiii.
Epistle	Galatians iii. 16—22.
Gospel	St. Luke x. 23—27.

In the collect to-day, we regard the grace which God giveth; the blessings He hath promised; and the faithful service which is the condition of our obtaining them.

The morning lesson describes the deliverance of Jerusalem from Sennacherib, which includes four particulars:—the irresistible power of the enemy; the helplessness of the city; the salvation which God wrought for it; and the gracious promise which he made, v. 30, 31; a promise which belongs to the Church, the new Jerusalem; against which no enemy shall prevail; for God will defend it, to save it, for his own sake, and for the sake of her King, the Son of David.

The evening lesson shews our duty to God; to devote ourselves to Him with hearty resolve and zealous service, as Josiah and the people bound themselves by a covenant to serve Him faithfully, and proceeded with zeal and activity to cleanse the city from all that defiled it. In the end, we see the difference between the service of the heart, and mere outward compliance. Good Josiah was taken away from the evil to come, and the people returned to their abominations.

The epistle explains that the Covenant of God in Christ, which was made to Abraham, remained through all ages in full force. The Law, which was 430 years after, could not disannul it; for, if righteousness and life could have been obtained by the Law, this would have made void the promise. But the Law was added because of sin, that all men being convicted, and guilty before God, the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.

The gospel declares our blessedness, who see the fulfilment of promises which prophets and kings desired in vain; and, God having fulfilled his covenant with us, it declares our obligation, to love the Lord our God with all the heart, and our neighbour as ourself. The application of the latter duty is beautifully shewn in the parable of the good Samaritan.

Wherever the Church dwells upon God's mercy towards us, she always applies the truth, to impress upon us the obligation of loving our neighbour. Throughout the yearly course, no duty is enforced so often as this. We find it in the services for the Circumcision; for the first, second, and third Sundays after the Epiphany; for Quinquagesima Sunday; for Good Friday; and for the first and second Sundays after Trinity. Indeed, all the Liturgy breathes the same holy, affectionate, and catholic spirit. Love to God and love to man are inseparable. Wherever one is wanting, the other can be no better than pretence.

LVII.

The Lord, the mighty God is great,
And greatly to be praised:
On Sion's hill, his chosen seat,
His royal throne is raised.

Joy of the earth mount Sion stands;
God is her sure defence;
How vain the threats of hostile bands
Against Omnipotence!

Glory and strength her walls surround,
The bulwarks of the just:
But not in these our help is found;
In God alone we trust.

For all the mercies we have known,
Our hearts thy Name adore:
Thee for our God and strength we'll own,
And serve Thee evermore.

FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

The guilt and judgment of an unfaithful Church.

Morning Lesson . .	Jeremiah v.
Evening Lesson . .	Jeremiah xxii.
Epistle	Galatians v. 16—24.
Gospel	St. Luke xvii. 11—19.

At length, the incorrigible guilt of Judah

cries for vengeance, and mercy will no longer strive with justice. The lessons to-day declare God's determination to inflict the long-threatened punishment, and the reluctance He shews to bring these judgments upon his chosen people prove how great had been his long-suffering; how vast their guilt; how certain now their calamity. The morning lesson is an awful picture of universal corruption. High, and low, even they who had so lately "stood to the covenant" with good King Josiah, "to walk after the LORD, and to keep his commandments, and his testimonies, and his statutes, with all their heart, and all their soul;" had cast away his fear, and abandoned themselves to abominable wickedness. As for the King, whose guilt was so greatly aggravated by the good example he had received from his father Josiah, the evening lesson declares that he should be plucked down from the place of his pride, and carried away captive; dying unlamented, and denied the common decencies of burial.

Yet a beam of mercy breaks through.—"Nevertheless, in those days, saith the Lord, I will not make a full end of you." God's promises to his Church universal shall not be frustrated by the guilt of individuals, or cities, or nations. The guilty shall perish; but God will preserve to himself a seed, and his Church shall yet endure, and flourish to all ages.

The gospel contains a lamentable illustration of man's ingratitude for God's mercy. Of ten lepers cleansed, only one gave thanks, and glorified God, and that one was a stranger. We are clamorous under affliction; but let relief come, and all is soon forgotten.

These things are written for examples; that, seeing the miserable end of the unfaithful, we may learn to avoid their guilt and punishment. How we may do this, the epistle teaches: "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh." The works of the flesh, which we are to avoid; the fruit of the Spirit, which we are to cultivate, are described and contrasted. Let us, therefore, who are Christ's, crucify the flesh, with its affections and lusts; while we seek of God, who is the Giver of all good, the increase of faith, hope, and charity; beseeching that we may so love that which He doth command, as to obtain that which He doth promise.

LVIII.

Almighty God! the pure, and just;
How shall we dare approach thy throne,
When, humbly prostrate in the dust,
With trembling lips our guilt we own!

Thy sons in name, to Thee baptized,
And blest with thy paternal care,
How have our souls thy love depised;
How mocked Thee with the heartless prayer!

But Thou hast bid us turn and live,
And stay'd thy wrath with long delay;
And wilt Thou with the sinner strive,
Yet spurn the penitent away?

O Lamb of God, for sinners slain!
Whose mercy flows so full and free;
Cleanse us from ev'ry guilty stain,
And give us grace to live to Thee!

FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

God is the Father of his People.

Morning Lesson . .	Jeremiah xxxv.
Evening Lesson . .	Jeremiah xxxvi.
Epistle	Galatians vi. 11—18.
Gospel	St. Matthew vi. 24—34.

The collect to-day is very similar to that for the eighth Sunday after Trinity. In both, we pray God to keep us from all hurtful things, and to give, or lead us to all things profitable. The difference in the petition, as in the subject for the two days, is chiefly, that in the former, we implore his fatherly care and blessing for ourselves, as the children of his adoption; to-day we address Him as the Father of the whole Church.

The epistle describes the character of God's children: they are dead to the world, and made new creatures in Christ Jesus; in whose Cross they glory, and in whose ways they stedfastly walk, whatever trouble or persecution they may incur thereby.

The gospel assures them of God's providential care; and requires of them in return entire devotedness to his service, and a cheerful confidence in his fatherly goodness: the

reasonableness of which is shewn by his care for the meaner objects of his Creation; the fowls of the air, and the lilies of the field.

The lessons display his dealings with rebellious children. The morning lesson reproves the disobedient by the example of the Rechabites, who had faithfully observed the commandment of Jonadab their father. The evening lesson presents God, as a long-suffering parent, who is unwilling to give up a stubborn child while a hope remains that he may receive correction, warning the house of Judah of the judgments He was about to bring upon them. "It may be," He says, "that they may return every man from his evil way, that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin." But they scorned reproof: they despised the warning: they even sought to destroy the Lord's messengers: and having thus rejected God, He denounced a heavier doom against them, and cast them from his mercy.

LIX.

Father, 'tis thine each day to yield
Our wants a fresh supply:
Thou cloth'st the lilies of the field,
And hear'st the ravens' cry:
Thy love in all thy works we see;
Thy promise, Lord, we plead:
And humbly cast our care on Thee,
Who knowest all our need.

Let not the world engage our love;
Nor cares our bosom fill;
But fix our heart on things above
That we may do thy will.
The comfort of thy light bestow;
Our faith and hope increase;
And let us in thy presence know
Contentment, joy, and peace.

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

The Authority of God's Ministers.

Morning Lesson . . . Ezekiel ii.
Evening Lesson . . . Ezekiel xiii.
Epistle . . . . . Ephes. iii. 13—21.
Gospel . . . . . St. Luke vii. 11—17.

To-day we desire of God, that his continual pity may cleanse and defend his Church, and that he will preserve it evermore by his help and goodness. The appointed services shew the authority and character of his faithful ministers, through whom He imparts to the Church the blessings we implore.

The morning lesson describes a faithful minister of God, and his commission. He is one, not chosen by the people to speak as they may approve; but sent by God himself to declare to them his truth fearlessly and independently; whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear.

The evening lesson describes, exposes, and condemns false teachers. They are self-appointed; deceiving; unfaithful to warn sinners; resisting God's people; teaching their own fancies instead of the word of God; lifting up their followers with false hopes, instead of establishing them in truth, and righteousness; flattering their vanity, and encouraging them in their sinful ease.

The epistle describes those pure and perfect spiritual attainments which it is the office of the faithful minister, by his labour to impart, and by his intercession to obtain, for the people committed to his charge. It affords a most exalted idea of the ministerial office that blessings such as these are connected with it. God is able to do exceeding abundantly, above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in his ministers by Christ Jesus; from whom they have received their commission, and whom they represent in the Church.

Ministers are sent, not only to comfort and establish the saints, but also to quicken those who are dead in sin with spiritual life. This office of theirs is figured in the gospel by the raising of a dead body by the word of Christ. His life-giving word spoken by his ministers in his Name, and in the power of the Spirit, is not less effectual than when uttered by his own lips.

LX.

We stand on hallow'd ground;
Approach with trembling feet!
Come plead, where blessings may be found,
Before the mercy seat.

With humble faith draw near;
Before his footstool fall,
And worshipping with holy fear,
On God, our Maker call.

Here, in thy house, O Lord,
Thy gracious help we seek:
Grant that we meekly hear the word
Thy faithful servants speak.

In all our hearts increase
The wisdom from above:
Lead us in righteousness and peace,
And perfect us in love.

SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

The Duty of the People.

Morning Lesson . . . Ezekiel xiv.
Evening Lesson . . . Ezekiel xviii.
Epistle . . . . . Ephesians iv. 1—6.
Gospel . . . . . St. Luke xiv. 1—11.

The object of the services to-day is to impress the people with a right sense, both of their personal responsibility, and also of their duty as members of the Church.

The epistle insists upon the unity of the Church, which it requires all christians to promote; and to this end, it exhorts them to cherish the dispositions which tend to peace; namely, lowliness and meekness, long-suffering, and forbearance in love.

The gospel condemns the tempers which break the unity of the Church; that is to say, a self-righteous and censorious spirit, busy with the supposed failings of others, but insensible to its own faults; and a vain glorious disposition, which desires, and strives for pre-eminence.

The great benefits which we obtain in the Church by christian fellowship, and through the ministration and intercession of God's ministers, have been often referred to. But it is most important to understand, that these are means of grace to those who improve them, but not pledges of salvation to such as neglect them. The lessons warn us against presuming upon our privileges. They teach that the promised blessings are only for such as seek them with a sincere and pure heart: that no intercession shall avert judgment from the impenitent and unfaithful: that the salvation, or perdition of each soul depends upon his own righteousness, or guilt: that God's promises of life to the righteous, and his threatenings of death to the wicked, are conditional; for the righteous man shall die if he turn back from his righteousness; but the wicked man, forsaking his sins, shall live. God will judge every one according to his own ways; and He, who hath no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, earnestly calls every one to repentance and amendment of life; and appeals to every sinner, "Why will ye die!"

LXI.

May we thy precepts, Lord, fulfil,
To do on earth our Father's will,
As angels serve above:
To walk in Christ, the living way;
Thy holy statutes to obey,
And live in christian love.

With one consent thy Name we bless;
We join thy goodness to confess;
In one our hearts agree.
One is our calling, one our name,
The end of all our hope the same,
A crown of life with Thee.

O God of love! our joy increase;
Unite thy Church in perfect peace;
Thy gracious help supply:
To ev'ry soul thy Spirit give;
In christian fellowship to live;
In joyful hope to die.

EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

The sufficiency of God's grace, and the peril of neglecting it.

Morning Lesson . . Ezekiel xx.
Evening Lesson . . Ezekiel xxiv.
Epistle . . . . 1 Corinthians i. 4—8.
Gospel . . . . St. Matt. xxii. 34—46.

It has often been remarked that the sins and punishment of Israel happened for ensamples, and are written for our admonition. Thus they are presented to-day. In the morning lesson, God Himself recounts their sins, in justification of the punishment He was bringing upon them; which, as the evening lesson describes under a figure, was no less than giving up the people of Jerusalem to destruction, and the city to the flames. He tells

the duties He had required of them; the abominations they should avoid; the statutes they should keep, and the sufficient means of grace which he had given them to improve. Especially, and this fact is often repeated, He gave them his Sabbaths, to be a sign between Him and them, which are at once the most effectual means of promoting spirituality, and the surest test by which to try it; as we improve, or trifle with them; as we find their service a delight, or a weariness. He tells how He vainly strove with them from generation to generation; while they continued to depise his statutes, to work wickedness, and to pollute his Sabbaths; unmoved alike by God's warnings, and by the punishment of their forefathers. Since therefore they had refused instruction, He declares that he will rule over them with fury poured out, and reclaim them with the severity of judgment.

The epistle applies the subject to ourselves. It affirms the completeness of the privileges we enjoy, and that we have in Jesus Christ sufficient help and grace so to improve them, that we may be blameless in the day of his coming.

In the gospel, the Lord sums up our duties in the two great commandments; and directs attention to the awful consideration by which obedience is enforced:—that he is exalted with power at the right hand of the Father, who will put all enemies under his feet.

LXII.

Brought to the Font with holy care,
And wash'd from Nature's shame,
We join the flock of Christ, and bear
The Christian's sacred name.

Blest privilege! but all in vain
Our new and heav'nly birth,
If we the truth of God profane,
And cleave to things of earth.

Father! thy holy Name we bear;
Like sons may we obey;
Mark thy commands with filial fear,
And keep thy perfect way.

To bless with power the outward sign,
Thy Spirit, Lord, impart;
That truth in all our life may shine,
And love possess our heart.

NINETEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Faithfulness in Persecution.

Morning Lesson . .	Daniel iii.
Evening Lesson . .	Daniel vi.
Epistle	Ephesians iv. 17—32.
Gospel	St. Matthew ix. 1—8.

As long as the spirit of the world is opposed to the temper of the gospel, the truth will remain, that "all who will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." As the gospel for the day shews that the goodness and mercy of the Saviour himself provoked the scribes to cavil, so his faithful disciples must be content to take up the cross, and follow their Master through opposition and reproach. If they are not called, like Daniel, and the three holy children, to resist even unto blood, they will find that even among those who profess, and call themselves christians, they will need courage and self-denial, if they would live up to the standard of the Gospel, instead of resting in the decencies of society.

The standard of christian practice, as to what we should avoid and do, is given in the epistle, with a powerful warning to beware how we follow the evil example of those among whom we live. The courage of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, whom the burning fiery furnace could not terrify to sinful compliance; and the constancy of Daniel, whom the den of lions could not deter from the full performance of his accustomed religious duty, nobly shew the spirit in which, under the most appalling circumstances, we should maintain, and act upon our faith. This was the spirit which animated the blessed martyrs, in whose blood were laid the foundations of our own Church.

But who is sufficient for these things! Truly no man, of himself; but our confidence is in Him who giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might, increaseth strength. This is signified in the gospel. He, who by a word, could raise the sick of the palsy, and give power to his helpless limbs, still hears the prayer of faith; and his grace is sufficient to enable the most feeble to glorify God, by his faithfulness to the truth, in the most difficult circumstances, and by his constancy under the most threatening trials.

LXIII.

I hold the sacred Book of God:
To hear, and keep, and use it, free:
But holy martyrs shed their blood
To win this word of life for me!

With stedfast faith in Christ alone,
The threats of impious power they spurn'd;
And bold that holy faith to own,
They gave their bodies to be burn'd.

In heaven with palms they triumph now;
We love to speak their honor'd names;
O may our lips and lives avow
The truth they kept through blood and flames!

Firm to confess the Christian name,
Though Hell oppose, and earth deride,
We'll keep the faith through fear and shame;
That faith, for which our fathers died.

TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Preparation for Judgment.

Morning Lesson . .	Joel ii.
Evening Lesson . .	Micah vi.
Epistle	Ephesians v. 15—21.
Gospel	St. Matt. xxii. 1—14.

The remaining services of the year are a kind of summing up of the whole; and the series begins to-day with a call to prepare for judgment, and a description of the preparation required.

The morning lesson sounds an alarm to Zion, God's holy mountain, that the day of the Lord, great, and very terrible, is at hand. It describes the terrors with which his wrath shall be made known; calls every one to earnest repentance as the means of averting them; declares the blessings which shall thereby be obtained; and promises the Holy Spirit, with salvation for all who call upon the Name of the Lord.

The evening lesson is very similar to the 50th Psalm; where God pleads openly with his people, convicts them of ingratitude and neglect, and shews the inefficacy of sacrifices and offerings, without holiness, justice, and mercy.

The parable contained in the gospel warns two classes of characters: the openly impenitent, who reject God's gracious invitations, and so bring upon themselves that judgment which shall fall upon his enemies: and the nominal christians, who receive his call, and profess his Name; but seek not to do his will. "Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb;" Revelations xix. 9; but upon whomsoever the wedding garment, which is "the righteousness of the saints," is not found, the same shall be cast out.

The epistle shews what our preparation should be. We are called to be holy: we are waiting for judgment: therefore we must always be careful to cherish, and to exercise, circumspection in all our conduct; activity, to redeem the time; wisdom, to learn and obey God's will; moderation in all worldly enjoyment; spirituality of mind, with praise and thanksgiving; grateful dependence; holy fear, and unfeigned humility; seeking to be always ready both in body and soul, and cheerfully accomplishing those things which God would have us do.

LXIV.

Lo! from his place, with glorious state surrounded,
Comes forth the Lord, to judgment's dreadful hour:
Now shall the earth, with guilt and shame confounded,
Tremble to see the terrors of his power.

Vengeance and wrath shall break her strong foundation;
Wasting and curse the hope of sin destroy;
Whelm'd are the proud with woe and desolation;
Shame for their pomp, and wailing for their joy.

Triumph, ye saints! proclaim the awful story!
Few though ye be, the gleanings of the plain;
Shout! for your King, the Lord of life and glory,
Comes with his people gloriously to reign.

TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

The World overcome by Faith.

Morning Lesson .	Habakkuk ii.
Evening Lesson .	Proverbs i.
Epistle	Ephesians vi. 10—20.
Gospel	St. John iv. 46—54,

Herein is the great distinction between the worldly character, and the christian; that the

one is governed by the consideration of present objects, the other looks forward to superior blessings: he lives by faith.

These two characters are contrasted in the morning lesson; to the right understanding of which it is necessary to consider the preceding and following chapters. In the first chapter of Habakkuk, the prophet is confounded, and expostulates with God, on the prosperity of the wicked, and the oppression wherewith they devour the man that is more righteous than they; referring more especially to the calamities which the Chaldeans should bring upon Jerusalem. The second chapter answers the inquiry by declaring the woes of them who, setting their heart upon the world, pursue their object by guilt and violence, and trust to that which cannot save: while it affirms that "the just shall live by his faith;" for the strengthening of which, two powerful considerations are offered; the supreme dominion of God; and the promise of the universal establishment of his righteous kingdom:—"the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." "The Lord is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before Him." Upon this, the prophet in the third chapter breaks into a song of praise and triumph; and finishes by declaring that although all earthly hopes should fail, "yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation."

The subject is pursued in the evening lesson, which shews sinners who refused instruction, and devoted them to vanity and violence, and who are well described as fools, perishing by their own success, and destroyed by their prosperity; too late lamenting their folly, and vainly imploring the help which they once despised. Their miserable end is contrasted with the safety and peace of those who hearken to the voice of wisdom.

The christian, living in a world whose pursuits and character are so opposite to his own, and who is moreover exposed continually to the wiles and assaults of spiritual enemies, must sustain, as long as he lives, a conflict in which he cannot overcome by himself. He must stand and combat in the strength of the Lord, and in the power of his might. He must put on the whole armour of God. "Stand, therefore," says the apostle; "having your loins girt about with truth;"—be confirmed in the knowledge of sound doctrine: "and having on the breastplate of righteousness;"—by a holy and unblameable conduct protect yourselves against the shafts of malice: "and your feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace;"—walk in quietness and love. "Above all, taking the shield of faith; wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked;" the temptations and trials, with which the evil one may assail us, and which fall harmless, if we promptly oppose to them a firm reliance on the help and promises of God. "And take the helmet of salvation," or, as it is expressed, 1 Thessalonians v. 8, "the hope of salvation," a safeguard for the mind, when trials and sorrows would beat it down. "And the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God;" that weapon with which Christ overcame in the day of his temptation. Thus armed at all points, the christian stands, like a soldier on the enemy's ground, watchful, firm, always obedient to his leader, contending, and praying; and that, not for himself only, but also for his brethren, the whole of Christ's Church militant, whose interest and duty are one with his own; and especially seeking a blessing for them who are set over it, that they may be worthy champions of the truth.

In the gospel, we have an illustration of the goodness of Christ in bearing with the weak, and confirming their faith. The nobleman who besought him to heal his son, appears to have acted rather from having heard or known of our Lord's ability to cure diseases, than from assured faith in his divine character and power. Accordingly, the first answer is a kind of reproof. The repeated request of the father, "Sir, come down ere my child die," stands in unfavorable contrast to the faith of the Centurion, "Speak the word, and my servant shall be healed." But he received the assurance, "thy son liveth," and went his way; and when he learnt from his servants that at the very hour when Jesus so spake, the disease left his son, he was convinced that the power which thus commanded diseases at a distance could belong only to the Christ, the hope of Israel; "and himself believed, and all his house"

LXV.

Arm, Christian, arm! the foe's abroad!
Address you to the fight!
Stand in the panoply of God;
And combat in his might.

The World, and all its hosts oppose,
And Hell, with all its powers:
Many and mighty are the foes;
But heav'nly strength is ours.

Let faith prevail; let hope abound;
Watch and contend in prayer:
This is the Christian's battle-ground;
No rest, no slumbers here!

Not feeble hopes, and faint desires,
The heav'nly crown will gain;
Endure and conquer! who aspires
With Christ to live and reign.

Strive with the World, with Sin,—with Death!
Now shall your warfare cease:
Rise, and receive the victor's wreath;
Enjoy eternal peace.

TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

The Perseverance of the Faithful.

Morning Lesson .	Proverbs ii.
Evening Lesson .	Proverbs iii.
Epistle	Philippians i. 3—11.
Gospel	St. Matt. xviii. 21—35.

That it is possible for the evil spirit to regain possession of the heart from which he had been cast out: that we may begin the christian course, and yet draw back to perdition: that we may again be entangled and overcome with the pollutions of the world from which we had escaped: nay, that the very chief of the Apostles, after he had preached to others, might himself become a castaway, we have the plain testimony of our Lord, and of his Apostles. So vain and dangerous therefore is that dream, which imagines that a man, once in a state of grace, shall infallibly be kept to the end; a fancy invented to prop the dogma of irresistible grace, and unconditional personal election, as one error requires others to support it.

The true nature of christian perseverance is shewn in all the services for the day. It depends on the blessing and help of God, striving with us by his Spirit; putting into our mind good desires, and giving us grace to bring the same to good effect; prospering our exertions; giving more grace to him who duly improves that which has been already imparted; but not irresistibly quickening the negligent, and keeping the unfaithful. God deals with us, in short, as reasonable, and accountable creatures; not as passive machines.

St. Paul in the epistle declares his confidence of the Philippians, that He who had begun a good work in them, would perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ; why! because to persevere is the sure privilege of all who are once renewed in Christ? No! It is in the first place, a hope prompted by affection; "it is meet for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart:" and secondly, it is a confidence reasonably founded upon their past conduct; inasmuch as they had been honourably distinguished for constancy in persecution, and for the warmth and liberality of their christian love. Their conduct had filled the apostle with affectionate admiration; and we observe the overflowings of his heart towards them, not only in this epistle, but also in the second to the Corinthians, to whom he offers them for an example; 2 Cor. viii. Yet he urges upon them to press forward, increasing even to the end, in all things to which they had already attained.

The lessons follow out the principle to its practical details, and shew the great blessings of perseverance in the ways of wisdom. They call to such fervent desires, and strenuous efforts, as though every thing depended upon ourselves, as the means and condition of obtaining that divine help, by which we shall secure strength and wisdom, safety and happiness.

The gospel shews in a very striking manner the conditional nature of the promises and blessings we enjoy. When the servant whose vast debt had been forgiven, unmindful of the mercy he had experienced, oppressed his fellow-servant, their common Lord, moved with just indignation, revoked his forgiveness, and delivered him to the tormentors. "So," continues our Saviour, "shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their

trespasses." The parable in its most limited sense shews the necessity that is laid upon us to live in christian charity; forgiving as we have been forgiven, and blessing as we have been blest: but it carries a wider application, and teaches how we may have obtained mercy, and yet by inconsistent and uncharitable conduct, bring ourselves again under the wrath of God.

No attainments therefore can warrant presumption. This world is the place for exertion, for watchfulness, for improvement. As long as the race continues, we must press forward. Through all the conflict, which will never cease till we lay down this mortal life, we must vigorously contend. We run, we contend, we shall conquer only in the strength of God; but he will not give victory to the indolent, nor bring salvation to the careless, for the sake of former desires which they have ceased to cherish, and former efforts which they have ceased to make.

LXVI.

O grant me, Lord, myself to see,
Against myself to watch and pray;
How weak am I, when left by Thee;
How frail, how apt to fall away!
If but a moment Thou withdraw,
That moment sees me break thy law.

Saviour! the sinner's only trust;
With trembling hope on Thee I call:
O raise the feeble from the dust,
And let me never, never fall.
Let not thy grace be given in vain,
Nor let me turn to sin again.

The pure and watchful mind bestow,
That trembles at the thought of sin;
Let me thy full salvation know,
O Thou, who didst the work begin;
Preserve me, lest I go astray,
And prove at length a castaway.

TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Our duty and hope.

Morning Lesson . .	Proverbs xi.
Evening Lesson . .	Proverbs xii.
Epistle	Philippians iii. 17—21.
Gospel	St. Matt. xxii. 15—22.

The epistle enjoins the Philippians to mark the good example of the apostles, and walk according thereto; and observe the evil conduct of bad men, its shameful character and evil consequences, that they might learn to hate and avoid it; having their conversation in heaven, and animated with the exalted hope of the coming of the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, and the glorious resurrection which by him they should then obtain.

In the lessons we see the consequence of good and bad conduct; every wise and good act, with its reward, being placed in contrast to the opposite sin and folly, with its punishment. The lessons are in fact an application of the precepts contained in the epistle.

Our Lord teaches us, in the gospel, that we are not to plead religion, and duty to God, to excuse ourselves from the just claims of society, and civil government. The religion which does not make a man a better neighbour, and a better subject, is false and vain. The worship and service of God claims indeed our first care; but we glorify Him when we adorn our profession in the eyes of men. We are guilty in his sight if we disobey the authorities and laws under which we live, unless by obeying them we should either commit a sin, or abstain from a duty. It is the command of our Lord himself, that we render unto Cæsar the things that be Cæsar's; as well as unto God the things that be God's.

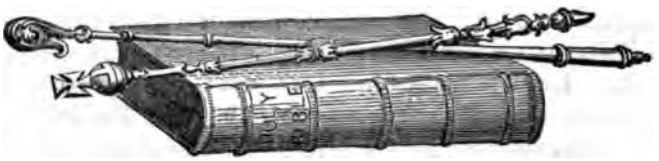
LXVII.

Lo! where the words of Wisdom shine;
Recorded in the Book divine,
Our life and death to shew:
The heav'nly path, the downward road,
Where holy duty leads to God,
Or sin, to endless woe.

Oh, may it be our wisdom here,
To serve the Lord with filial fear,
And holy gratitude:
Our heav'nly calling to display,
By shunning still the evil way,
And walking in the good.

The watchful mind, the prudent heart,
From sin and folly to depart,
To each, O Lord, be given:
Teach us the way of life to know,
That we may walk with Thee below,
And see thy face in heaven.

CHURCH AND KING.



"FEAR GOD—HONOUR THE KING."

No. XI. AUGUST 1, 1837.

THE CHURCH AND DISSENT,

CONSIDERED IN THEIR PRACTICAL INFLUENCE.

CHAPTER IX.

The Claims of the Poor, and the Duty of the State.

THE application, the most serious consideration of all, and for which, chiefly, this volume has been written, yet remains;—how may the blessings of religious instruction be extended to the poor? It would have been very pleasant to have confined attention to this subject, without alluding to any topic which called for censure; for there are many circumstances which make it peculiarly painful to me to speak thus of Dissent. But dissenters have exerted themselves so actively, not only to prevent the Church from becoming more extensively useful, but also to narrow her present means of usefulness, and even to vilify her character, that it was an act of justice so to expose their principles, that their power of mischief may be restrained: and such loose notions have prevailed on the nature, objects, and power of a Church, that before a decided effort could be made for extending religious instruction to all the Country, it was necessary to establish the fact that the Church is not merely the best, but the *only* agent to effect it. Dissenters may enjoy their own opinions freely, and use every exertion to make them popular; but they must never again be allowed to withstand the Church; and if they attempt it, they must be quietly put by, as disqualified by their prejudices to judge, and having no right to interfere.

Dismissing now the subject of Dissent, never, I trust, to return to it, I proceed to consider the active duties to which we are called by the spiritual destitution of our brethren: and truly the contemplation of the field before us is most appalling: districts, which have doubled and quadrupled their population; towns, each of which might be the capital of a kingdom; where no instruction is provided for the multitude,—no man caring for their souls. Looking at the metropolis, the heart sickens at the contrast between the population, and the church-room. Nor does this apparent contrast by any means shew the full extent of the evil. Many hold pews in their parish churches who live only a part of the year in London; others content themselves with a single attendance on the Sunday; others procure accommodation to the extent of their possible, and greatly beyond their general wants; and thus pews are empty, and churches half filled, while two-thirds of the people are denied the opportunity to worship.

There are two effectual agencies for raising the character of the poor;—intercourse with their superiors; and religion. Both are in effect denied to them in large towns; where, at the same time, they are continually tempted to the most brutalizing of vices, drunkenness, and sensuality. However therefore we may lament the amount of vice and crime, we may

justly wonder that the whole body of the poor is not a mass of moral corruption.

It is happy for us all that religion, upon which the weakness of human nature seems every where instinctively to rest, can exert a powerful control where it appears to be little more than a name. Its influence is felt in some degree by the most neglected among us, in the order of society, and government; in the Sabbath; in places of worship, which every where strike the eye; in festivals, which are seasons of common recreation; and in the services which hallow our domestic duties.

Even to this extent, the benefit to society is very great; but it falls infinitely short of what the present happiness, and future hopes of the individuals require. They need the living principle, which, glowing with love to God and man, shrinks from the approach of evil, and delights in the practice of good:—the faith, clearly seen, and strongly grasped, which rejoices in the comfort of God's presence amidst all the trials and sorrows of this life; and rests on the assured hope of future glory.

Religion is emphatically the poor man's blessing. His condition preserves him from many snares which interfere with its due reception, and exposes him to many sorrows which nothing else can relieve. Heavily do we suffer for our past neglect to extend to them this inestimable blessing: and most deservedly, for there is no duty, no obligation, more absolute on the influential part of society, than this. It is found in their ignorance of its value, which we are bound to enlighten; in their helplessness, which denies to them the power to obtain it, except through those whom God has set over them; in the trials and sufferings which attach to poverty, under which only religion can support them; and in the vices to which poverty, with ignorance, is prone to sink; for if they are not taught to find comfort in religion, they will seek amusement and forgetfulness in dissipation.

Let not the poor be regarded merely as they contribute to the convenience of the rich. Both are of one blood; redeemed by one Saviour; fellow-servants to one Lord; and appointed to stand together for judgment at one tribunal. Their common interest requires the disparity which exists; but that very disparity binds them the more closely, by making them necessary to one another. The condition of each demands the cultivation of its proper virtues:—active benevolence, humility, and condescension, on the one side; patience, and gratitude on the other; brotherly kindness in both. In performing these duties, each finds a corrective of the evils which attach to his station. By considering and relieving the poor, the rich are saved from that cold, and wretched heartlessness, which is sure to be the curse of a life devoted to selfish pleasure. By receiving the favours of the rich with grateful attachment, the poor escape that envious repining, which is the bane of the cottage. Little cause will be found for pride on one side, or envy on the other, if a just and extended view be taken of their respective conditions. The poor, it is true, have fewer means of worldly gratification; but they are privileged to know, what the rich must not forget, that this world, in which only they are unequal, is but a stepping-stone to eternity: that they are the objects of peculiar promises, and blessings: that our Saviour honoured their condition by assuming it for himself: and that God is their declared protector and avenger, against all who dare neglect, despise, or oppress them.

The poor are made for the rich; but in a far stronger sense, the rich are appointed for the poor. Wherever God commits the power, he imposes the responsibility to be useful; and whether the talent of any man be wealth, or station, or influence, or intellect, he is answerable as an offender for all the good which he might, but neglects to do; and for all the evil which he might, but neglects to prevent. That servant was severely judged who did not improve his one talent: we are left to infer the guilt and punishment of him who misapplies and squanders his ten.

The character of the poor depends upon circumstances, over which they can have little or no control, because they are determined and created for them by their rulers and superiors. It is evident therefore that a most extensive and awful responsibility must attach to station and influence; no less than being accountable for the ignorance of the poor, with all the sufferings, vice, and crime, which

arise from it. Rulers are bound, as they shall answer for their trust at the bar of God, to provide for them instruction, suited to their condition, and adequate to their wants; exerting their power to encourage virtue, and to restrain vice; and never daring to trifle with their interests, whether in health, comfort, or morals, for any object of political, or commercial expediency. This responsibility is shared by all, who by the expression of opinion, or the more direct exercise of political power, may influence the measures, or strengthen the hands of the Government.

We cannot entirely prevent the sufferings of the poor; because deficient employment, bad harvests, hard winters, and sickness, will always press on them severely. But religion will strengthen them to bear these trials; afford a safeguard against the vice that would aggravate their calamities; exalt their patience, by placing it upon a right principle; support them with peace and hope under all their afflictions; and make their homes generally a scene of contentment, and quiet enjoyment, which the rich might envy. In one most important respect, poverty may claim an advantage over wealth: for the rich are strongly tempted to rest too much on worldly enjoyment, which never can satisfy, and which palls in the possession. But the poor, denied the means of seeking pleasure from the vanities of the world, are led to find it in religion; which is the perfection of present happiness, exalted by the most animating hope. What charity therefore is comparable to affording them the means to possess this blessing: a blessing which combines all that is most desirable in this life, with the promise of that which is to come! and how is the obligation enforced by considering how fearfully ignorance and irreligion aggravate the miseries of poverty; while these, in their turn, strengthen the temptation to vice.

At length let us grapple with the whole evil, remembering that the interest at stake is nothing less than the present happiness or misery, and the everlasting salvation or perdition, of millions of our brethren. Dare we limit our concern to a part, and leave the rest to perish? Shall we think that to build a new church here and there, where a pressing necessity may exist for it, will be an excuse for leaving multitudes uncared for? Let us rather act upon a system, comprehensive, complete, and effectual; cultivating the whole waste; gathering in the whole flock; and satisfied with no plan, which does not provide for each, and for every one, the opportunity of becoming a Christian in deed, and in truth.

But let us not hope to do this unopposed, nor despond when we are powerfully resisted. From the beginning of the world the powers of evil have striven against the good, and we must look for the conflict to continue. As surely as an effort is made for good, so surely will there be an effort to counteract it. We are called to an aggressive advance upon an enormous mass of sin, and misery, and we may be certain that no easy conquest will be afforded. Against us will be arrayed the natural hatred of the wicked, the hostility of the interested, the opposition of party. These will have for allies, on our own side, the fears of the timid, and the censure of the coldly cautious, who condemn as extravagant whatever they shrink from undertaking. To overcome all these will require the most determined zeal, regulated by the utmost prudence: faith, to know under the most unfavourable circumstances that the cause of God must triumph; patience, to strive on, amidst all discouragements, till He shall stretch out the right hand of His omnipotence: entire devotedness, and singleness of heart, that a cause so pure may be stained by no selfish motive: and perfect holiness, to secure the confidence of the good, silence the malice of enemies, and approve ourselves to all men.

If an angel were sent down on a mission of holy benevolence, to assume a human body, and labour for a time on earth; then to be recalled, and rewarded with divine and everlasting honours, as he had fulfilled his charge; what language should we deem adequate to express his infatuation, if, trifling with his duty, and forgetting his hope, he should devote to passing shadows powers which were given for eternity! Yet, what circumstance, or obligation, would attach to that angel, which does not apply to ourselves. Is our duty less important; our nature less divine; our destiny less glorious? What is every

Christian, but an angel in a human body, privileged to be for a short time God's minister of good on earth; but soon, perhaps very soon, to drop this mortal incumbrance, enter into his rest, and receive a crown of glory!

Let voluntary exertions and contributions be encouraged to the uttermost; but if we rely on them to effect what is necessary, we shall be grievously disappointed. The experience of the past may enable us to judge of the future; and the greatest effort, on the most stirring occasion, has seldom raised a national contribution to a quarter of a million. A general assessment for the relief of the poor has quietly, and without an effort or a question, raised thirty times that sum, year by year.

Let the surplus revenues of cathedrals, and whatever more may be *justly* assessed upon ecclesiastical property, be made available as far as possible: but if all this could be made available from the present moment, instead of being a future and distant revenue, it would scarcely keep pace with the increasing wants of the Country; leaving all the existing destitution unaided.

A large debt of gratitude is due to the Church-building Society, for all that they have done, and for the discretion with which they have managed the funds at their disposal. But while they have been providing church-room for four hundred thousand, the population of the Country has increased four millions; and we are now in a worse relative condition than before they commenced their labours.

It is a noble attempt of the Bishop of London to build fifty new churches in the metropolis by private subscription; and if it succeed, it will be an instance of liberality unequalled in modern ages. I will not trust myself to entertain a doubt of his success. The energy of his character, and the influence he deservedly possesses, will enable him to do more than perhaps any other man. But after he shall have completely succeeded, at least half a million of the inhabitants of London, on the most moderate estimate, will still be denied the means of religious worship and instruction. When these shall become our accusers at the Judgment day, and charge their perdition upon our neglect, what answer shall we make!

It is evident that no exertions, whether of individuals, or of societies, can do what is required. Only the State possesses the means; and the State therefore is bound to perform the duty; for where a duty is to be done, the sole possession of the power fixes the responsibility. This obligation upon the State is confirmed by the truth, that religion is the only sure foundation of national power;—for it is righteousness that exalteth a Nation, and in righteousness shall the Throne be established;—and the only effectual means to secure the great end of government; the restraining of vice, and the promoting of virtue. Not, however, that we should restrict the term 'State' to the executive government. It includes all the people; and especially those who by their votes, or even by their petitions, may influence the conduct of the Administration. As a public, general, and national object, it can be done effectually only through their rulers: but the duty, with the blessing of performing it, and the guilt and punishment of neglect, rests upon the people.

Expense cannot be pleaded as an objection. We have paid twenty millions as the price of extinguishing the name of slavery in the British dominions; and the claim of our brethren around us is at least as strong as that of the negroes of Jamaica. We have been paying from seven to eight millions yearly, to relieve poverty, and to punish crime; and ignorance and depravity, the source of both, equally, nay more, demand a corrective. The money thus expended would relieve from other charges; for religion is more effectual to check pauperism, than the workhouse; and to prevent crime, than the jail.

Taxes are levied from society, the amount of which is not to be estimated: taxes in the idleness and dishonesty of those we employ: taxes through the multitude of outcasts of both sexes, the vagrant, the felon, and the prostitute, who corrupt and prey upon the public. The law cannot effectually reach these evils. It lops the branches which shoot across our paths, but leaves the root untouched. *This* can be destroyed only by causing

religion to operate universally among the poor.

How much are we at the mercy of our domestic servants: personal comfort, expenditure, even character, depending so greatly upon them. Who does not feel it a treasure to possess a servant in whose integrity full confidence can be placed. But the character of our servants must be that of the class from which they are taken; and if we leave that class without religion, losses by their dishonesty, and annoyance by their misconduct, are the deserved punishment of our own neglect.

Thus, resting the question upon the narrowest grounds which selfishness itself can prompt, personal interest would urge to this great duty. Vagrancy destroyed, pauperism restrained, vice controlled, crime prevented, domestic economy and comfort promoted, and a cordial understanding restored between the higher and lower classes, now unhappily so much estranged,—will it be affirmed that this is more than may be expected from extending religious instruction effectually to all the poor? And at what cost may all these blessings be secured? A cost which none would feel! which in direct pecuniary advantage would repay itself tenfold. Even a million a-year is little more than a farthing a week for each inhabitant of England:—so vast is the gain to perform our duty; so great the cost of neglecting it!

Where such principles prevail, the poor themselves would form a moral police, far more effective than any which the law can employ; and their benevolence would relieve the distresses of one another to an extent which would leave comparatively little ground for public charity. Even now, the feeling they display towards one another is admirable. The shameful libels which have been published respecting them, and too much acted upon in the New Poor Law, give them a claim upon those who know them to vindicate their character. I know them well, not from cursory inquiries; or from an acquaintance with a few individuals or families among them; but from a general intercourse with the poor in a very populous, and I may add, unfavourable district, where I had continually from 70 to 100 under my charge, visiting great part of them at their cottages day by day, and year after year. I have witnessed their sufferings: I have seen with admiration their patience, their sympathy, their benevolence, their gratitude. Great as may be the charities of the rich, they sink to insignificance when compared with those of the poor; who must deny and stint themselves to perform them. Their own experience teaches how bitter are the sufferings of want; and many would perish but for the kindness of persons little less poor than themselves. Again and again have I seen the friendless, and the stranger, sick and destitute, cared for in all things by the charity of neighbours, who themselves were struggling for bread. I have seen the wretched outcast on her death-bed nursed by her miserable associates with all the solicitude and gentleness of their sex. These are every-day occurrences, done as things of course. When sickness deprives individuals or families of all means of support, except a scanty allowance from the parish, it is chiefly from the kindness of neighbours that they obtain necessaries, the attendance and food, which they cannot pay for. Little, indeed, do the rich know the severity, and extent, of the sufferings of the poor; and as little do they appreciate the bountifulness of their charities.

They ought to receive our warmest sympathies, for they deserve them. I have heard them, indeed, taxed with being ungrateful, but never by those who had any claim upon their gratitude; and with insolence, but not by persons who properly respect their feelings. They are peculiarly sensitive to indignity, and though prudence may compel them to be patient under insult, they deeply feel and resent it. There are, of course, exceptions, but I have described their general character, as far as I have seen; and I have met with some thousands.

How can we allow multitudes to perish from ignorance; while, if one is known to perish in the streets from famine, we are filled with horror! Does not the fact convict us of cherishing for ourselves very inadequate notions of religion; for, if we duly felt its importance, could we remain satisfied while its influence and hopes are denied to them!

This is undoubtedly the truth; and we suffer, and shall suffer, both in the Church, and in ourselves, as long as we continue to

neglect the poor. Nor is this to be specially referred to a judicial punishment. It admits of simple explanation. The influential from station and property, necessarily secure a preference in the parish church. Hence, as a town outgrows its church-room, the poor become excluded; and the Church, whose ministrations are restricted to the rich, will be associated with ideas of pride, fashion, anything but religion.

There is a consideration beyond this. The mutual relation and dependence, which bind the rich and poor in a common interest through all the civil and social duties of life, equally apply to religion. Each division of society is incomplete in itself, and absolutely requires what the other only can supply. The upper classes reason more than they feel, for the forms of society oblige them to control their feelings; and habits created by education, with the extended view they must take of their perhaps complicated worldly interests, make their conduct habitually a matter of calculation. The poor and uneducated feel more than they reason; for their simple interests, easily understood, and extending little beyond the present moment, require not much thought; and they surrender themselves habitually to the influence of feelings which they have never been required to control.

Applied to religion, each of these characters separately, leads to a serious evil: the one, tending to the cold decencies of formality; the other, to the wild extravagancies of enthusiasm. Blend them, and they combine in a perfect character: the judgment of the one class, regulating, and in its turn, animated by, the zeal of the other.

Thus, when we extend religion to the poor, the blessing will return into our own bosom. Their warmth, and zeal, will inspire, or shame us into life; while it will be our business to regulate their zeal, with wisdom and prudence. But whatever means may be employed for instructing them, due caution must be observed against the smallest deviation from sound principles. No man can say, thus far only will I compromise with expediency. When principle has once been passed, no fixed line remains; and motives which never could have asked a first concession, will be found all-powerful to demand a second; every new advance in a wrong course making the next step more easy. It has been shewn that religious opinion, instead of being merely a personal question, as too many regard it, affects all the interests of society and of government. Nothing, therefore, must be done or sanctioned, which may tend to disorder. There are two evils, which, under no circumstances, and in no degree whatever, should be endured;—the assumption by laymen of spiritual functions which belong exclusively to the clergy; and the usurpation of that power by lay committees, which would interfere with the independence of the clergyman, and the authority of the bishop. It has been thought by many, that a less orderly and strict system may be effectual for the poor; but this is a mistake, for enthusiasm is the danger to which they are chiefly liable, which is to be prevented only by giving them sound scriptural instruction, and controlling them by an orderly Church discipline.

The mode in which religious instruction should be furnished to the poor in large towns, is properly to be determined by the bishops; and especially by the ecclesiastical commission. But suggestions, formed not without much consideration, and offered with all deference, may be excused, though they should not claim approval.

There appear some objections to the plan of dividing new churches between pews, and free seats, which I may perhaps overrate, but which seem to claim attention. The lightest of all is, that the architecture and ornaments of a building which the higher classes would deem only properly decent, would be thought pride and pomp by the poor; each judging by comparison with their own domestic accommodations. This objection, perhaps, is entitled to little weight, except that a great expense is created for what half the congregation would condemn.

Another objection arises out of the aversion which the poor generally feel, especially the superior class of them, to appear as objects of charity. A proper sense of religious duty would overcome this feeling; but with that sense we have yet to impress them.

The most important objection is, that a discourse adapted to the educated part of the

congregation is above the comprehension of the illiterate, because their knowledge of facts is limited, which prevents them from understanding much that is familiar to others; and their habit and power of reasoning does not enable them to follow an argument which may appear very simple. The instructions given to the educated must be addressed in a great measure to their judgments; their habits of thought enabling them to follow without an effort the argument of the preacher, and to understand the conclusion. But the preaching most useful to the illiterate, is that which sets before them plain facts and precepts; and warmly, affectionately, and earnestly, enforces the practical application. The minister will scarcely succeed in doing this, unless he be so familiar with the mode of thinking, and expression, in the class he addresses, as to make it easy for them to understand all he says: a power which he will gain, only by zealous pastoral exertions among the poor. But the clergyman in a large town is inevitably thrown so much among the higher and educated classes, that his habits of thought and expression become formed after their standard.

These remarks, however, apply rather to the neglected poor; for those educated in the National Schools acquire that knowledge of the Scriptures, and of the festivals and services of the Church, which may enable them always to attend her worship with advantage: while the District Visiting, and similar Societies, now so generally and actively extending themselves, are well calculated to create, and strengthen, an anxiety to attend her ministrations.

A general and effectual system to provide religious instruction for all the poor can be accomplished only with the assistance of the State, which, it is unnecessary to add, would now be refused. But it would be a lazy and cowardly conclusion, if, therefore, we should shrink from demanding it. It is not now the question whether the demand would be popular or not, but whether or not it is founded upon truth, and duty. If so, it is not our concern whether we are millions, or thousands, or hundreds, or tens; the truth, for its own sake, is to be as firmly asserted, and the duty as steadily enforced. The stronger the opposition, the more the question will be discussed, the better understood, and the more decidedly maintained and acted upon by all its advocates. A general sluggish acquiescence would be infinitely more to be deprecated than an almost unanimous opposition.

We have much at the present time to encourage and aid us. The attention of all the Country is strongly fixed upon the Church, for the determined attacks directed against her, have made her the common rallying point of the loyal; who are in a great degree organized by Conservative associations. The friends of the Church are generally impressed with the duty and necessity of instructing the poor, and partial efforts are being made in all directions towards effecting this object. We should, therefore, commence with a very powerful and united phalanx to act upon the Country and the Parliament; and whenever the point shall be carried, the Church commission is just the machinery we should require for giving effect to it, for it combines in one the heads of the Church, and the heads of the Government.

We have long stood firmly on the defensive, while the enemy exhausted himself by his desperate attacks. His courage sinking, his ranks wavering, the time is come for a forward aggressive movement. This principle, the duty of the State to care for all the people, is exactly what we want to make our victory complete, and its fruits permanent. It is a principle in advance of the public mind, but towards which public opinion is steadily and rapidly tending. In maintaining it, we stand upon the highest possible ground; for it is enforced by every obligation of duty, whether to God or man: and we place our enemies in a false position; for they can resist it only upon selfish and party motives. Yet not that we should call them enemies. We shall conquer, not a party triumph, but blessings even for them. Now they are vassals of an evil principle: but when the progress of our success shall have given them freedom, none will be more zealous to destroy their former oppressor.

The subject must never again rest. Session after session it must be impressed upon the House of Commons, till the principle is recognized: and the more simple the form in

which it is advanced, the better. The resolution, that a CHRISTIAN STATE IS BOUND TO TAKE CARE THAT THE MEANS OF RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION AND WORSHIP ARE DULY PROVIDED FOR ALL THE PEOPLE, affirms a principle not to be honestly resisted, and embraces no details upon which objections might be founded. This therefore would make its way, and would surely, at length, be carried. The details arising out of its application would be for the Government to arrange with the heads of the Church.

In the mean time, the advocacy of the conservative, and the hostility of the destructive press will keep the subject before the public; and the power of this engine will be increased, as the influence of the press is extended, through the proposed most opportune change in the stamp duties. When the destructives pressed this change, they knew not what additional force they supplied to make their overthrow complete. The measure will gradually approve itself to the feelings and interests of the inhabitants of populous towns and districts, as they see the direct advantages it will afford to themselves; and petitions in support of it will multiply year by year. The zeal directed to this great object will be felt in every thing connected with the Church, and give tenfold energy to all her operations. This will become, in effect, the great engrossing national question; and by the time it shall be settled, every man will have been taught to know the Church, and every good man will have learnt to love her.

But above all things, let us beware of regarding this as a mere political question, to be governed by human wisdom, and decided by party strength. The cause is of God; by whom the weakest shall surely triumph, and without whom the strongest must fail. Resting on Him therefore, and going forth only as His instruments, we KNOW, that whether quickly, or slowly; in weakness, or in strength; the cause, which is His, shall prosper; and that we are advancing to assured success. But success is a feeble term for the triumph that awaits us. God, who will not give His glory to another, will vindicate the work as His own. If He try our faith and patience, and teach us our own weakness, by disappointments, He will in His own time pour forth a blessing so far beyond all our thoughts and hopes, that every one shall see and confess His hand. Forth, then, to the labour to which He calls us; and "let us not be weary in well-doing; for in due season we shall reap if we faint not."

THE CHURCH ESTABLISHED ON THE BIBLE;

OR, THE DOCTRINES AND DISCIPLINE OF THE CHURCH SHEWN, IN THE ORDER AND CONNEXION OF THE SERVICES SHE APPOINTS FROM THE SCRIPTURES.

TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Growth in Grace.

Morning Lesson . .	Proverbs xiii.
Evening Lesson . .	Proverbs xiv.
Epistle	Colossians i. 3—12.
Gospel	St. Matt. ix. 18—26.

THE epistle is addressed to a Church whose members had made very considerable attainments in religion. The Apostle thanks God on their behalf, because of the faith they held, the love they displayed, the hope they cherished, and the good works in which they were fruitful. But, instead of being satisfied with what they had already done, he earnestly desires, and continually prays, that they may still go forward, and abound more and more in every christian virtue.

The lessons, like those for the last Sunday, continue to place wisdom and goodness in contrast to sin and folly. The chief difference is, that to-day they refer rather to the conduct of good and bad men; on the former, to the consequences of good and bad conduct. Both afford ample subject for profitable meditation.

The gospel directs us to the strength in which alone we can perform our duties:—to Christ; by whom we have life from the dead, and deliverance from all infirmities. With

lively faith in him coming to the Father, we have confidence that he will raise us from the death of sin,—absolving us from all our offences; and loose us from our infirmity,—delivering us from the bands of those sins which through frailty we have committed.

LXVIII.

Oh, may our lips and lives express,
The holy gospel we profess;
That men may see our virtue shine,
And own the doctrine all divine.

Thus to the World shall we proclaim
The influence of the Saviour's name;
Whose pow'rful grace prevails within,
To free us from the chains of sin.

To him our hearts, ourselves, we give;
Henceforth, renew'd in him, we live;
And, resting on his holy word,
Wait for the coming of the Lord.

TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Christ is All.

Morning Lesson . . Proverbs xv.
Evening Lesson . . Proverbs xvi.
Epistle . . . . Jeremiah xxiii. 5—8.
Gospel . . . . John vi. 5—14.

The Church closes the christian year with a service well calculated to crown all that had gone before; and to stir up our hearts and minds to those holy feelings, and devout meditations, with which we should prepare to celebrate the advent of our Lord.

The lessons still present the excellence of righteousness, and the folly of sin; but to-day they teach also the chief motive which encourages to good, and deters from evil: that God, who is just and holy, regards, controls, and judges all things; over-ruling every event; trying every heart; graciously receiving the prayer of the righteous; but abhorring and condemning the wicked.

In the portion appointed for the epistle, we have a full and clear prophecy of Christ, in his character and office. He is Man, a righteous Branch from the stock of David: he is God; "Jehovah, our righteousness." He is ordained to be a King; to reign and prosper, and execute judgment and justice in the earth: a Saviour and Protector, to deliver, and keep his people in safety. Through his merits we are accounted righteous before God. He will gather all nations to himself, and redeem the seed of the house of Israel with a salvation of such exceeding glory, that the deliverance which he wrought for them when he brought them out of Egypt shall, in comparison, be no more spoken of.

In the gospel, he is acknowledged and confessed to be the Prophet which should come into the world, as Moses had foretold. The point which struck the multitude with this conviction seems to have been, not so much the divine power displayed in working a miracle, as the nature of the miracle itself. Through Moses, their forefathers had been fed with manna in the desert: Christ, by the word of his power, had caused five barley loaves, and two small fishes, to suffice the multitude abundantly in the wilderness. The resemblance for a time convinced them that in him the promise was fulfilled which Moses spake, Deuteronomy xviii. 15. "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me, unto him shall ye hearken."

Gross and earthly in their imaginations, their hearts immediately revolted, when Christ taught them the necessity of spiritual life and obedience. More favoured than they, we have been baptized into his Name, and nourished with his doctrine. Let us remember that as our privileges are great, so are our duties: that as we are taught to know, we are bound to serve him: that he will reign, not only to save and defend his people, but also to judge with just and terrible judgment all who reject him. "It shall come to pass that every one which will not hear that Prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people." "Behold, he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen."

LXIX.

Jesus! refuge of thy people,
Let thy majesty appear;
All thy foes have sunk before thee;
Now thy throne triumphant rear.
Long expected,
Lo! the great salvation near.

From the lands the night of ages
Rolls its gloomy vail away;
Round the earth the dawning glory
Rises to eternal day:
Heav'nly blessings
God bestows in rich display.

Death is swallow'd up in triumph!
Zion's mourners weep no more:
Joy and honour crown her people,
Long oppress'd and scorn'd before:
Faithful Saviour,
All shall now thy Name adore!

LXX.

Worship, honour, glory, blessing,
Lord, we offer to thy Name,
Young and old, their praise expressing,
Join thy goodness to proclaim.
As the hosts of heaven adore Thee,
We would bhw before thy throne,
As the angels serve before Thee,
So on earth thy will be done.

A SHORT EXPLANATION OF THE CATECHISM.

The Catechism consists of five parts; of which the first is introductory, and sets forth the privileges and obligations of our baptismal vow: the second declares our faith, in the Apostles' Creed: the third teaches our duty, by the ten commandments: the fourth relates to the nature and objects of prayer: and the fifth explains the Sacraments.

Part I.—Of Godfathers and Godmothers.

Baptism is valid and complete without sponsors; but the Church hath always required them, as a pledge that the child shall be duly instructed in the Christian faith.

From the promise and vow made on his behalf, he derives three very important advantages. It makes known to him his duty in few and plain words: it supplies a new motive to perform it in the solemn circumstances of the vow; and it gives him additional security that he shall be properly instructed, since his sponsors have taken upon themselves a parental care for his soul's welfare. He is bound to believe and to do as they have promised for him, because their promise includes nothing which is not required by God himself as the conditions of salvation.

Of the privileges gained in Baptism.—"Wherein I was made a Member of Christ." The intimate union which subsists between Christ and his people is made plain by sensible images. We are members of one Body whereof he is the head, guiding us by his wisdom, and keeping us with his life. He is the true vine, of which we are the branches, deriving from him strength to be fruitful. "The child of God." It was said to the Jewish nation, "ye are the children of the Lord your God;" Deut. xiv. 1; and if this privilege were obtained under a perfect and temporary dispensation, much more under the Gospel. Our Lord himself hath taught us to address God as our Father! "And an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven." This expression has a twofold sense, and it holds good in both. The kingdom of heaven sometimes means, as in our Lord's parables, the visible Church of Christ, into which we enter by our baptism. It also signifies heaven itself, which, with its everlasting happiness and glory, is truly our inheritance, unless we despise and renounce it for the world, as Esau sold his birthright for a mess of pottage.

Of the obligations of our baptismal vow. The duties which we covenant to perform as the condition of obtaining the blessings which God hath covenanted to bestow, are, to repent, to believe, and to obey.

There are three classes of sins which we solemnly engage to renounce. "The devil and all his works." The works of the devil are such dispositions and conduct as belong to the character of that powerful and malignant Spirit, and which he continually endeavours to put into our hearts, and to provoke us to practise. The character and government of God is love, peace, and order. The character and influence of the devil is hatred, pride, and confusion. The various sins which are peculiarly the works of the devil are comprehended in rebellion against God, and enmity towards Man. To the first class belong idolatry, witchcraft, and divination, whether real or pretended: irreverence, profaneness, blasphemy, and perjury; all revolt against the powers and authority which God hath

ordained on earth; as disobedience to parents; rebellion and disorderly opposition to lawful rulers; contempt, scandal, and enmity against God's ministers. To the second class belong envy, hatred, malice, slander, lying, &c. and most especially, seducing and tempting another into sin. This character belongs peculiarly to the works of the devil; that they are entirely wicked, in all their degrees, and under all circumstances.

"The pomps and vanities of this wicked world;" which comprehend the inordinate desire and sinful abuse of wealth, power, or distinction. These are not evils in themselves, if they are pursued in subordination to the great end of our being, possessed in lowliness of mind, used with soberness and moderation, and directed to the glory of God. But when grasped at greedily, and directed to the pomp and vanity of the possessor, they harden the heart, and fatally estrange it from heaven.

"And all the sinful lusts of the flesh." That is, excess in the appetites and desires which in themselves are necessary to life, and which the goodness of God hath made comforts and pleasures to us; but by which irregular and excessive indulgence, destroy the health, and debase the character. These are luxury, gluttony, drunkenness, indolence, and sensuality.

Part II.—Of a Christian Man's Faith.

"Secondly, that I should believe all the articles of the Christian Faith." Not that we should merely assent to the truth of religion. In that sense, 'the devils believe and tremble;' but that we should receive them as truths revealed for our salvation, rest and act upon them, proving their influence upon us by our conduct. We must believe unto righteousness.

The substance of Christian faith is to believe in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, three Persons and one God, into whose Name we are baptized. But the errors and heresies of men made it necessary very early to explain this faith more circumstantially. The amplification of it in the Creeds was necessary, "not because the Church believed more, but because the Arians believed less."

The term Creed, from the Latin, '*credo*, I believe,' means a summary of the principles of religion. It has a twofold use; to guide the instruction of young and ignorant disciples; and to stand as a short and plain declaration of the faith of the Church, whereby her doctrines may be more easily compared with Holy Scripture, and all heresies avoided and condemned. The very form of words of what is commonly called the "Apostles' Creed," is probably not more ancient than the fourth century, but it agrees in substance with the creeds of all the earliest churches, and with the doctrines taught by the apostles. Indeed, it is the same, both in substance and order, with that which St. Paul calls "the principles of the doctrine of Christ;" "the foundation of religion;" Heb. vi. 2. For "the doctrine of baptisms" includes faith in the persons and offices of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, into whose Name Christians are baptized; and, with "the laying on of hands," expressed the authority and unity of the Holy Catholic Church and the privileges enjoyed therein. These, with "the resurrection from the dead," and "eternal judgment," form the whole of the Apostles' Creed.

The Creed should be repeated thoughtfully and solemnly. We should well consider its truths, for by them we are saved, and in them is our strength and comfort. Eminently practical, we should apply them to our hearts and lives: making them the subject of our prayers, and the guide of our ways.

Of the Creed.

I believe in God the Father, Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth. Genesis i. ii; Psalm xxxiii. 6—9; civ. cxlvi. &c. He is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Ephesians i. 3, &c. He is our Father, for he made us in his image, Genesis i. 27, and cares for us by his goodness. St. Matthew vi. 25—34. But in a far higher sense are we his children by grace, having received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba, Father! Romans viii. 14—17.

And in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.—Man, by his disobedience, lost the image of God, and enthralled himself to sin and death; but "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son," who, by the sacrifice of himself, redeemed us from the

curse: and by his victory over death and hell, saved us from our spiritual enemies. And as by the fall of Adam, our natural head, that fault and corruption prevails in the nature of every man, whereby he is very far gone from original righteousness, and is of his own nature inclined to evil; so by the satisfaction, obedience, and victory of Christ our spiritual head, all who truly believe in him are restored to God's favour, renewed in righteousness, and made heirs of everlasting life.

Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary; Matthew i. 18—25; Luke i. 26—35; Isaiah vii. 14. It was necessary that the satisfaction to be made for the guilt of man, and the victory which should deliver him from his spiritual enemies, should be wrought, and achieved by man; that mercy might be reconciled with justice by a perfect obedience done in human nature; and that the triumph of the wicked One over our first parents, should be lost in shameful defeat inflicted by the seed of the woman. But since all men, conceived in the ordinary course of nature, partake of its corruption, and the Redeemer, though "made like unto his brethren," must yet be without sin, a body was prepared, subject indeed to pain, and sorrow, but pure and spotless; which the everlasting Son took unto himself, so that God and man was one Christ.

Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried.—See the services for Passion Week.

He descended into hell. Psalm xvi. 10; Luke xxiii. 43; Acts ii. 25—31. The simple meaning of this article is, that his soul went into the place of separate spirits; and it merely affirms that our Lord was truly and completely dead, his soul being separated from his body; in opposition to a heresy which presumed that he only lay in a swoon or trance, from which he revived at the appointed time. That our Lord had a human soul, as well as body, is not to be doubted; and that it went to the place where the spirits of the faithful are in joy and felicity, until the resurrection, is proved by his declaration to the penitent thief. It should be observed, that the word hell, though we now understand by it only a place of torment, properly means the invisible world generally; as well the place of happy, as of wicked spirits.

The third day he rose again from the dead, he ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty. See the Services for Easter, and Ascension Day.

From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead; Matthew xxv. 31—46; 1 Thessalonians iv. 13—17; 2 Thessalonians i. 7—10; Revelations i. 7. It is a most encouraging reflection that we shall be judged by him "who loved us and gave himself for us:" but how will the misery of our doom be aggravated, if we receive sentence from him who sought to save us, and we would not: who died for us, strove with us, interceded for us, and all in vain.

I believe in the Holy Ghost, as one of the persons of the blessed Trinity, verily, and indeed, God, and Lord; who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified; into whose Name also we are baptized. Who, proceeding from the Father and the Son, communicates to us all heavenly gifts. "Who spake by the Prophets," imparting through them the divine truths which it pleased God to reveal to man. By whom Christ was anointed for his mission: and who taught and strengthened the apostles for their ministry. Who is the giver of life, in the creation of the worlds; in quickening the soul dead in trespasses and sins; and in giving their vital efficacy to the Sacraments, and all other means of grace. Who is the Spirit of adoption, by whom we are regenerated, sanctified, and renewed after the image of our heavenly Father; enriched with all wisdom and grace; strengthened in his might, and enabled to fruitfulness. Who is the Comforter, sent to abide in our hearts, and fill them with holy dispositions, and heavenly tempers; love, and joy; peace, and hope. Who is the Spirit of truth and unity; in whom, and by whom, the Church of Christ, through all ages, and in all lands, is one.

The holy Catholic Church.—The church was founded by Christ before his ascension, by the charge and authority which he committed to his apostles, and their successors "to the end of the world;" and it was esta-

blished by the Holy Ghost, who imparted all the spiritual gifts which its necessities required. It is therefore holy, as to its origin, which is from God; as to the character required of all its members, which is to do righteousness; as to the object for which it is appointed, which is to gather in the whole world to the faith and practice of the true religion. It is catholic, that is, universal, because in all ages and countries, its government is the same: there is "one Lord," by whose appointment, and in whose name, his ministers govern; its doctrine is the same, there is "one faith," salvation by Christ; the entrance is the same, there is "one baptism," into the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. The marks of the visible church are, that it holds the true faith, according to God's word, which it truly and fully sets forth; that it rightly administers his holy sacraments; and that it is governed according to Christ's appointment, by his apostles, and their successors, the bishops, to whom alone it belongs, as vested with the supreme authority, to ordain and govern ministers. Nor was this truth disputed for more than fifteen hundred years; but at the Reformation, some of the reformed churches, through the violence of their contest with the corrupt and tyrannical church of Rome, were so carried away by the prejudices which such a struggle occasioned, as to reject the apostolic order of bishops, and govern the church by a presbytery. An orderly system of government being thus lost, the people encroached more and more upon the power of their ministers, till they had usurped all authority; and took it upon themselves to make ministers of whomsoever they would. This is what is called "the voluntary system," in which every one may assume to himself the office of a minister; and the ministers have no rights or power, but are in all things subjected to the people, to be set up or pulled down as they will. It is one lamentable feature of all the voluntary sects, that though they profess to be governed by the Word of God, they read it very little indeed in their meetings for public worship. — See all the services between Easter and Trinity Sunday.

The Communion of Saints.—It is the privilege of the saints to hold communion with God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; but this article applies rather to the comfort and advantage they enjoy in their union with one another. The Church is one body in Christ: Rom. xii. 4, 5; 1 Cor. xii.; one spiritual temple, into which we all, as lively stones, are built up: 1 Pet. i. 4—8. Thus, being parts of one building, we are called to establish; being members of one body, to serve and comfort one another. The duties enjoined upon us, therefore, are lowliness and meekness in ourselves; peace and love towards the brethren. The blessings we derive, are found in the direct and visible fruits of love and unity; in the efficacy of prayer for one another; Ephes. vi. 18; Phil. i. 4—11; Cor. i. 9; James v. 16; 1 John v. 14—16; and in the superior power of united prayer: Matt. xviii. 19, 20.

The forgiveness of sins.—By this we confess the general doctrine of the forgiveness of all our sins for Christ's sake, but more especially, the means, by the right use of which we obtain the blessing: Thus, the Nicene creed has it.—"I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins; as it is written, "Repent, and be baptised for the remission of sins:" Acts ii. 38; "arise, and be baptised, and wash away thy sins:" Acts xxii. 16. For baptism is God's appointed means whereby we enter into covenant with Him, whose mercy and grace therein promised we shall surely gain, if we give diligence on our part to fulfil the conditions.

The Resurrection of the body.—1 Cor. xv.; Rev. xx. 12, 13. Without this, our salvation would be incomplete; for in the destruction of our bodies we should still suffer the penalty of sin. But Christ hath perfected redemption. No trophy shall be left for Sin; and Death, the last enemy, shall be destroyed, when, at the voice of the archangel, our bodies shall rise, changed, and fashioned like unto our Lord's glorious body, that with him we may reign, to *life everlasting, Amen!*

Part III.

The Commandments, proclaimed to Israel by the voice of God, and written by His finger, stand with everlasting authority.

Their spiritual meaning, and exceeding breadth are shewn by our Lord in his sermon on the Mount. The practical application in the catechism is so clear and forcible, that it leaves nothing to be added.

Part IV.—Of Prayer.

There are three things to be especially considered in prayer; *first*, that we have a due sense of our wants; a full conviction of our helplessness; and an assured faith in God's power and great goodness: *secondly*, that when we pray, we approach reverently, and with holy fear, restraining all wandering thoughts, and cherishing a solemn sense that we are in His presence before whom all hearts are open: *thirdly*, that we presume not to ask anything in word, which we do not truly, deliberately, and earnestly desire; remembering that it is required of us, as the proof of our sincerity, to strive to the utmost for all that we ask; and to resist and avoid all from which we pray to be delivered.

Paraphrase of the Lord's Prayer.

Our Father; who hast made us in thine own image, and restored us, ungrateful and guilty, by thy great goodness; who art gracious in caring for us, merciful in correction, and always willing to receive thine offending but penitent children; *who art in heaven*, yet condescendest to abide with us, and to make thy dwelling in our heart: "For thus saith the High and Holy One, who inhabiteth Eternity, whose name is holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a humble and contrite spirit, and that trembleth at my word!" *hallowed be thy Name!* we praise Thee; we bless Thee; we worship Thee; we glorify Thee; we give thanks to Thee for thy great glory, O Lord God, heavenly King, God the Father Almighty! *Thy kingdom come!* inspire the hearts of all who profess thy Name, with the spirit of godly love; quicken with spiritual life them who are called Christians, but are dead in trespasses and sins; let thy light arise upon the heathen, and make bare thy mighty arm in their sight; turn away ungodliness from Jacob, and bring the children of thy faithful Abraham, into the possession of the promised blessings; "let the people praise Thee, O God; yea, let all the people praise Thee." *Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven:* As all the angels worship and serve Thee continually, so let all mankind love Thee, the Lord their God, with all their heart, and with all their mind, and with all their soul, and with all their strength; "Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself, shall be with them, their God;" even so, let the wilderness become an Eden, and the desert the garden of the Lord!

Give us this day our daily bread. Thou, who clothest the lilies of the field, and hearest the young ravens when they call upon Thee, bless our honest labour, and give us food and raiment, as Thou seest we require, with thankful hearts to Thee, the giver of all good. Nor regard our creature wants only, but nourish us abundantly with "the bread of God, which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life to the world; "Lord, evermore give us this bread."

And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. We owe ten thousand talents, and have nothing to pay: be merciful unto us, and forgive us our debt! but how can we presume to ask this, if we are hard, unkind, and unforgiving, towards our brethren! Oh, to reflect how small in comparison are the worst offences that we are required to forgive, how great the sins for which we must implore pardon! Lord, "send thy Holy Ghost, and pour into our hearts that most excellent gift of charity, the very bond of peace and of all virtues."

And lead us not into temptation. Thou knowest our hearts, and the sinful dispositions which, perhaps, need only to be encouraged by prosperity, to gain the dominion over us, and turn us aside from Thee. We cast ourselves upon thy wisdom and goodness. Sanctify with thy blessing, all that we obtain; keep from us whatever would be a snare to our souls; and give us that assured faith in thy fatherly goodness, that we may trust and bless Thee, in all thy dispensations.

But deliver us from evil. "Almighty God, who seest that we have no power of ourselves to help ourselves; keep us both outwardly in our bodies, and inwardly in our souls; that

we may be defended from all adversities which may happen to the body, and from all evil thoughts which may assault and hurt the soul."

For thine is the Kingdom; and we would joyfully obey thy righteous government: *the power;* and we rejoice that we may rest under thy sure protection: *and the glory;* before which cherubim and seraphim veil their faces, evermore praising Thee, and saying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts, heaven and earth is full of the majesty of thy glory; glory be to Thee, O Lord, most high. With whom thy faithful people, redeemed from the power of the grave, shall see thy face, and praise Thee, *for ever and ever. Amen.*

Part V. of the Sacraments.

The word sacrament does not occur in Scripture. The original Latin word, sacramentum, expressed a pledge deposited in a sacred place; or an oath, particularly the oath of fidelity taken by soldiers to their general. The definition given by the Church, "*an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace, given unto us; ordained by Christ himself, as a means whereby we receive the same, and a pledge to assure us thereof;*" excludes the five which the Church of Rome hath added: for of confirmation, penance, orders, matrimony, and extreme unction, only the last has anything resembling an outward visible sign, and this is but a vain and perverted application of a practice recommended by St. James, and referring only to the miraculous powers which existed in the apostolic age of the Church. Nor can either of the five be said to have been ordained by Christ himself, except orders.

The definition guards also against two errors concerning the nature of sacraments; that of rejecting the outward sign, as the Quakers; and that of regarding the sacraments as merely symbols of a christian man's profession; which is in effect to overlook or deny the inward spiritual grace.

The grace of baptism may be the better understood if we consider those things which prefigured it, and also that which itself represents.

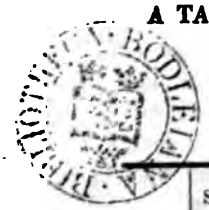
The ark was a baptism, 1 Peter iii. 20, 21; whereby Noah and his family were saved by water, being delivered from the judgment which destroyed the ungodly. The passage of the Red Sea was a baptism, which delivered Israel from their enemies, and introduced them upon a pilgrimage which should bring them to Canaan. Circumcision agreed with baptism, in being a seal of the righteousness which is by faith, whereby the children of faithful Abraham became the sons of God, and obtained a title to his covenanted blessings. Baptism itself figures the death, burial, and resurrection of our Lord; whereby we die, are buried, and rise again with him; that, being dead to sin, we may remain free from its mastery, and walk thenceforth in newness of life. For the Scripture affirms plainly, that we obtain thereby the remission of sin, Acts ii. 38, and xxii. 16; and become the children of God. *Christmas Day, Second Evening Lesson.*

The blessings promised by circumcision were conditional upon the repentance and faith of those who were made partakers thereof: yet Jewish infants received the rite, obtained a title to the blessings, and became bound by the obligations. They may disavow the obligation; but then they cast away their hope. The analogy fails in no point upon which an argument can be raised against the claims of the christian child; whom the Gospel would deprive of a most important privilege without giving him any present equivalent, if baptism were to be denied him.—*See the services for Circumcision, Easter Even, and Easter.*

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper has been treated in the service for Thursday before Easter: but one remark seems required on one of the answers in the catechism:—*the body and blood of Christ, which are verily and indeed taken and received by the* faithful *in the Lord's Supper.* While we reject, with contempt for its absurdity, and with abomination for its idolatry, the fancy, that the elements after consecration are changed into the very body and blood of Christ, and are therefore to be worshipped; a fancy not imagined until seven hundred years after our Saviour's death, and not affirmed as an article of faith by the Romanists, until five hundred years after that, we nevertheless firmly believe in the real presence of Christ in the sacrament; whereby the faithful, and they

only, do verily and indeed eat of his flesh and drink of his blood; not corporeally, but spiritually; according to the full import of his own declarations, St. John vi. 32—58; receiving life, nourishment, and strength thereby. As also the Church expresses it—"Then we do eat the flesh of Christ, and drink his blood; we dwell in Christ and he in us; we are one with Christ and he with us."

A TABLE OF THE MOVEABLE FEASTS FOR THE NEXT TWENTY YEARS.



TO ASSIST IN USING

"THE CHURCH ESTABLISHED ON THE BIBLE."

Year.	Sundays after Epiphany.	Septuagesima Sunday.	Ash Wednesday	Easter Day.	Ascension Day.	Whitsunday.	Sundays after Trinity.	Advent Sunday.
1838	5	Feb. 11	Feb. 28	April 15	May 24	June 3	24	Dec. 2
1839	2	Jan. 27	— 13	March 31	— 9	May 19	26	— 1
1840	5	Feb. 16	March 4	April 19	— 28	June 7	23	Nov. 29
1841	4	— 7	Feb. 24	— 11	— 20	May 30	24	— 28
1842	2	Jan. 23	— 9	March 27	— 5	— 15	26	— 27
1843	5	Feb. 12	March 1	April 16	— 25	June 4	24	Dec. 3
1844	4	— 4	Feb. 21	— 7	— 16	May 26	25	— 1
1845	1	Jan. 19	— 5	March 23	— 1	— 11	27	Nov. 30
1846	4	Feb. 8	— 25	April 12	— 21	— 31	24	— 29
1847	3	Jan. 31	— 17	— 4	— 13	— 23	25	— 28
1848	6	Feb. 20	March 8	— 23	June 1	June 11	23	Dec. 3
1849	4	— 4	Feb. 21	— 8	May 17	May 27	25	— 2
1850	2	Jan. 27	— 13	March 31	— 9	— 19	26	— 1
1851	5	Feb. 16	March 5	April 20	— 29	June 8	23	Nov. 30
1852	4	— 8	Feb. 25	— 11	— 20	May 30	24	— 28
1853	2	Jan. 23	— 9	March 27	— 5	— 15	26	— 27
1854	5	Feb. 12	March 1	April 16	— 25	June 4	24	Dec. 3
1855	4	— 4	Feb. 21	— 8	— 17	May 27	25	— 2
1856	1	Jan. 20	— 6	March 23	— 1	— 11	27	Nov. 30
1857	4	Feb. 8	— 25	April 12	— 21	— 31	24	— 29

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